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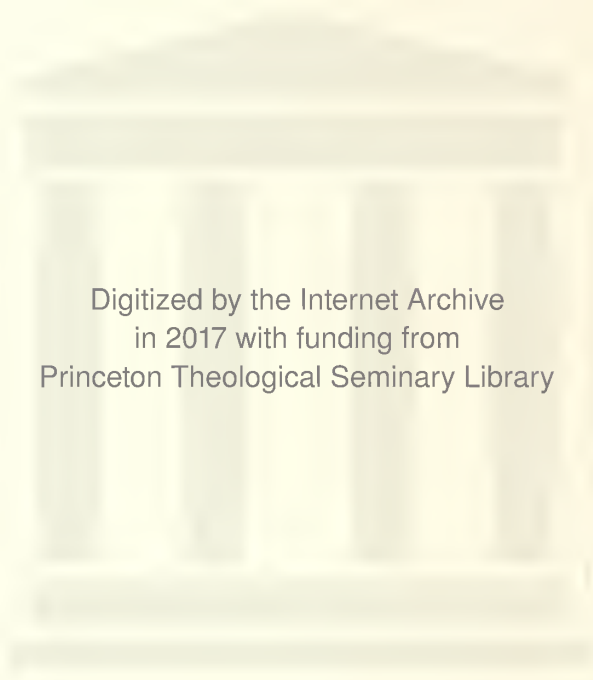
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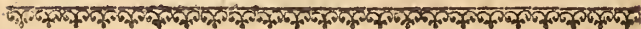


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Mr. West's  
EXAMINATION  
*of the DOCTRINE of*  
ATONEMENT.



MEMORANDUM

TO : Mr. [Name]

FROM : [Name]

SUBJECT : [Subject]

1. [Text]

2. [Text]

6  
THE  
SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE

OF

SCP # 36,315

ATONEMENT,

PROPOSED TO CAREFUL

Examination ;

XII 164

BY STEPHEN WEST, A. M.  
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN STOCKBRIDGE.

*Ought not Christ to have suffered these Things—?*

LUKE, XXIV. 26.

*Without shedding of Blood is no Remission.* HEB. IX. 22.

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REPORT OF THE

# STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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FOR THE YEAR 1900

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# P R E F A C E.

**A** MONG the several doctrines of divine Revelation, that of the *Atonement* holds a place of principal importance ; and, has so evident a connection with the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, that they will be found, on careful inquiry, to stand or fall with *it*. *This* lies at the bottom of that system of sentiments which principally distinguishes *Christianity* from *mere natural religion*. With *this* are connected the doctrines of the *Divinity of Christ*, *justification by an imputed righteousness* and the *perpetuity of punishment* in the future world. For, if the doctrine of *atonement* be given

given up ; that of the Divinity of Christ will no longer be maintained : As we can hardly believe that a God ever came into the world to perform a work which did not require the perfection and power of *a God* ; or, that he came to reveal in words, and enforce by example, a system of doctrines, which might have been as perfectly revealed, and as compleatly exemplified, by a *mere creature*. If there be no atonement for sin, the *repentance* of sinners must be the sole ground on which they are pardoned and saved : And, consequently, no other righteousness than their own is, in any sense, the ground of acceptance in the sight of God. If, moreover, the *moral law*, that perfect rule of divine government, will admit *penitents* to favour, without any atonement ; it will hardly be believed that the disposition, in the governor of the world, which such a law, so constructed,



structed, and so understood, will naturally exhibit; can ever admit of his inflicting *eternal torments* on any of his creatures. For, if the offence of the sinner be no greater, in the view of God, than may be overlooked merely upon the consideration of his *repentance*, and, not only wholly overlooked, but the transgressor be treated with every mark of *friendship* and *favour*: Who will believe that there is *displeasure* enough existing in the divine mind, ever to inflict *eternal torments*? For *God* to make such a distinction between one who confessedly spends this short life *chiefly* in sin, and one who spends it wholly so; and *that*, too, when the crimes of the former, as the case may be, and many times *in fact* is, greatly exceed those of the latter; naturally surpasseth all belief.

Therefore, he that renounceth the doctrine of *atonement*, to be consistent  
 with

with himself; must, also, renounce those of the *Divinity of Christ*, and the *eternity of punishment*. And, when these three grand points are given up, there is nothing left, in the system of revealed truth, materially to distinguish it from mere natural religion: And a crucified Christ will no longer appear to be the *power of God* and the *wisdom of God*.

For *this* reason it is that the doctrine of *atonement* has ever been a *rock of offence* to the enemies of divine Revelation. Because it stands in *this* connection, and so evidently implies, both the *Divinity of Christ*, and the *eternity of punishment*; many have laboured, with their whole strength, to subvert it. But, if *this* falls, it falls like a strong man; pulling down with it, the very pillars of Christianity.

These considerations, it is hoped, will be a sufficient apology for an attempt to vindicate this great doctrine,

and

and set it in its true and scriptural light. Of the success with which the design is executed, in the following pages ; the candid, intelligent reader must judge. I can only say that a desire to support *an hypothesis* has not, that I am sensible, *glossed* any of those passages of Scripture, which I have had occasion to consider, in the discussion of the subject. I pretend not, however, to be free from those prepossessions which are common to sinful men.

But the following treatise, imperfect as it is, with all due deference, is humbly offered to public view ; in hope that it may be the occasion of throwing some small degree of light on so important a subject. No caution, it is readily seen, is necessary to be given to any one, against receiving any thing that is contained in it, upon the mere authority of the writer. If what of truth may be contained in

the following examination of the  
Scripture Doctrine of atonement, may  
gain admission into the minds and  
hearts of such as shall be at the trouble  
of perusing it; this will be the utmost  
that can reasonably be asked, or de-  
sired by the Author.

*Stockbridge, 14th April, 1785.*

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CHAP.



THE  
SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE

OF

ATONEMENT, &c.

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CHAP. I.

*Observations respecting God's chief End in the  
Creation of the World.*

ONE principal difficulty in understanding this great and fundamental doctrine, probably consists in our ignorance of the necessity of it. So long as we discern no *necessity of an atonement* for sin, in order to forgiveness, the *nature and import of it* will be unintelligible. And, the reason why an atonement for sin is necessary, will not be seen, without some just and general view of the great End for which God originally gave birth to Creation.

THOUGH unassisted reason might be very unequal to the determination of so important a question, divine revelation hath abundantly supplied the defect; in forming our sentiments on a question of such moment, it becomes us to be especially careful that we do not pervert nor go aside from the instructions of the word of God. Ta-  
king

king Revelation for our guide, we need not be afraid to enquire into things which are above the reach of mere natural reason. And, by these unerring oracles we are unquestionably authorised to conclude, that *a display, or manifestation, of his own true and infinitely holy character, was the chief and ultimate end which God had in view, in creation.*†

FOR God to manifest his own proper character is, invariably, to manifest something that is excellent. Wherever we discover the divine character, we see something that is excellent. To say, therefore, that a manifestation of his own true and holy character was God's chief and ultimate End in creation, is no more than saying, in the language of Scripture, that he made all things for his *pleasure, for his glory, or for his great name's sake.* It is the pleasure, and the glory of God, to make some external exhibition of his own inherent perfection; and, to discover to his creatures, his own proper character, which is, in itself, infinitely excellent. God evidently designed to exhibit an external image, or portraiture of his own infinite mind, in which its beauties and excellencies might be seen by his creatures. But, the excellencies of MIND, we are all sensible, can be discerned by others, only in the external expressions of its capacity and disposition, or temper. So that we have no where to learn the divine character, but in his works, taken in connection with his word.

As we all agree that God is most eminently *good*, it is evident that the real disposition of his

† For a particular enumeration of passages of Scripture in proof of this point, see the late President Edwards on God's last End in the creation of the World.

his infinite mind doth not appear, excepting in works of goodness, and where some good is actually done. His true character, therefore, cannot otherwise be manifested than in doing good. Consequently, a manifestation of the proper character of God, will necessarily comprehend all the good, all the created felicity, which he ever had it in design to bring about; and, which will ever be accomplished.

THAT the chief and ultimate End which God had in view in creation, was a manifestation of his own true and proper character, may appear from these two considerations, viz.

I. WE can conceive of no other End which the supreme Being could have in view in this great work. The motives for God to *create*, must, of necessity, all be within himself. No motive could be derived from any thing out of himself; for no such thing had any existence. And, to say that Creation itself, or any thing created, was the motive, in the divine mind, to creation; is but going in a circle; and leaves us as ignorant of the *End of creation* at the close of our inquiry, as at our first setting out,

To say that the happiness to be produced by creation, was God's primary End in giving birth to it, supposes that the Creator is essentially of a disposition to be pleased with the happiness of his creatures. This must be true, in order that the happiness of creatures might be a motive to him to create. And, if God is essentially possessed of a disposition of this kind of sufficient strength to induce him to *create*; He neither needed, nor in the nature of things could have, any motive from without himself, to this great work,

work. In this case the disposition to produce and diffuse happiness, must, itself, be the motive to the work of creation; and, not the hitherto uncreated happiness. And, if this disposition were not originally of such strength, as necessarily to flow out in its natural effects; there neither was, nor could be, any thing in the universe, to give it new strength, and draw it forth into action. If the disposition to produce and diffuse happiness were not, itself, the motive to creation; we can conceive of nothing to give spring to it, and set it in motion: And, it must, of course, remain utterly unaccountable that ever God made the world.

THE object of the divine Mind, in creation, could not be really to add to himself, or increase his own fulness: For, his being and fulness were already infinite; and, of course, beyond a possibility of increase. It remains, therefore, that to diffuse that infinite and unbounded fulness which he possesseth in himself, must have been the primary and original end of creation. And, this is nothing different from saying that *a manifestation of his own true character, was the chief and ultimate End which God had in view, in creation.*

II. THERE could, in the nature of things, be no higher or more excellent end of creation, than a manifestation of the true character of God. As the divine character is in itself, transcendently excellent; so are all the manifestations of it in the exercises of his perfections: And, in these exercises and manifestations, there is greater beauty, than in all created virtue together. And as there is a beauty in the exercises and displays of the divine perfections, infinitely superior to all created excellency and beauty; there is, also, proportionably



proportionably greater felicity in the divine mind, in these exercises, than can possibly exist in all creatures. Consequently, it is, in itself, the most desirable thing that can be conceived, that God should exercise and display his own glorious perfections. Every thing which is either desirable, or beautiful, in creatures, is found in an infinitely higher degree in the exercises of the inherent perfections of the divine Mind. And, these exercises are naturally accompanied with infinitely greater good, than the united exercises of all created power and virtue together. To say that the beauty and worth of the exercises of God's perfections, consist principally in the virtue and happiness which they produce in creatures, is to make the virtue and happiness of God, himself, of less worth and importance than those of his creatures. And, this is the same as to say that *finite* virtue and happiness, are of more worth than *infinite*.

THE *effects* of the exercise and display of God's perfections, are the virtue and happiness of creatures. But if the virtue and happiness of creatures, are of real worth; that same kind of virtue and happiness existing in an infinitely higher degree, in the Creator, is infinitely more so. And, therefore, the exercise and manifestation of the divine perfections is an object, in itself considered, of infinitely greater importance than the good of the creature.

THOUGH the created beauty and good which are the natural effects of the exercise and manifestation of the divine perfections, must of necessity be considered as connected with these manifestations: The objects, nevertheless, are two; and, capable of an entirely distinct consideration.

And,

And, as they are capable of being distinctly and separately considered, the virtue and good of the creature, must be considered only as the stream to the fountain, when compared with the virtue and happiness of God. And, consequently, the the good of the creature, considered as an object in and of itself, could no more give spring to the divine perfections, and put them into exercise; than the stream which proceeds from the fountain, could put the fountain itself into motion, and cause it to overflow.

As, therefore, there could be no other, or higher end of creation, than a manifestation of the true and proper character, the real perfection of God, we may safely conclude that this was the chief and primary End which God had in view, in creating the world: And, that the cause and reason of creation is to be sought no where but in the divine mind itself—in the real, essential perfection of God.

It being evident, then, that a manifestation of his own true and proper character, was the chief and ultimate End which God had in view, in creation; these several consequences will naturally follow from it, viz.

I. THAT, all God's government will be calculated, in the best manner, to discover to his creatures, his own true character; and, exhibit a genuine picture of it to the world. That this is, and ever will be, the case, may certainly be concluded from the unchangeable nature of God. God's works will all be carried on with the same design with which they were originally begun. Its purposes are all connected, uniform, and harmonious. With Him there is no variableness,  
nor



nor even shadow of turning. As he gave birth to creation with a view to display the excellencies of his own glorious character; with the same view, and for the same desirable end, he continues, preserves and governs the world. For his pleasure they *now are*, as well as originally *were* created. All that God *says*, and all that he *does*, have one uniform and glorious object in view. And his government is as true a picture of his character, as his *moral law*, which is frequently and justly stiled a transcript of the divine perfections. Accordingly, we may forever expect to see his mind written, and his character as indubitably expressed, in what he *does*, as in what he *says*—in the government which he *exercises*, as in the law which he *has given*. For, with the same uniform design he creates, gives law, and administers government.

THE same glorious design which is expressed in creation, will be invariably expressed in preservation: For, in strictness of speech, *preservation* is no more than *creation continued*. What gave birth to the existence of creatures, will direct in the government over them. And should we entertain a thought that God's moral government will not be eternally administered in such a manner as to express, to the best advantage, his true character; we must at once admit, either that he has changed his original scheme, or that the government of so vast and complicated a system is become too unwieldy for its great and original Creator: Either of which suppositions is atheistical and absurd.

2. FROM the preceding observations it will follow that the *good of the creature*, in itself considered, was not the chief and principal end of creation.

creation. However closely a *manifestation of the divine perfection* and the *good of the creature* may be connected together: they are still capable of being viewed as distinct objects, in many respects infinitely diverse from each other. Though it be readily granted that God's ends are answered *in the good of the creature*; nevertheless, the designs and purposes of God, and *that* wherein these purposes and designs are accomplished, are as perfectly two, as any different objects whatever. A parent's whole pleasure may be in the good of the child: nevertheless, the *parent's pleasure* and the *child's good*, are two objects, capable of entirely distinct and separate consideration. And however closely they may be connected together, the very supposition of their *connection* implies that they are *two*; and therefore, capable of being separately considered. So, however closely the *'glory of God*, or a manifestation of his true and proper character, and the *good of the creature*, may be connected together; the objects are, nevertheless, in nature really two; and entirely capable of distinct consideration. And, if in nature *two*, one may have a primary and original influence in the divine works, rather than the other. But, the more important one, or that in which there is the greatest degree of weight, excellency, and worth, every thing concurs to prove would indeed be the object of chief consideration. As much more beauty and worth, therefore, as there are in the real exercises and displays of the divine perfections and character, than in the created fruits of them in creatures; (however close and inseparable the connection may be between these different objects) so much more is the *former* an original and chief End of God in creation, than the *latter*.

3. It follows, from what has been said, that God will take effectual care, that in all his administration, the majesty, the superior dignity of his own infinitely excellent character, shall be fully and perfectly preserved. Since God made the world for the sake of displaying his own true character, we may rest assured that he will take effectual care that the glory and dignity of it be effectually preserved in the view of all his creatures. Nothing will ever take place in the divine government that will have a tendency finally to sink the character of God, in the view of his creatures : But, on the other hand, in his progressive administration, it will continually rise higher and higher, appear more and more respectable, and be clothed with greater majesty and glory. Every part of the divine conduct will certainly be such as to demand the highest veneration and esteem, and tend in the view of all intelligencies, to increase that infinite distance which really subsists between him and all created beings.

No part of the divine conduct will ever be such as naturally tends to represent in a diminutive light, his hatred of all opposition to the good for which he made the world, or his abhorrence of rebellion and wickedness. For this would not exhibit his true character, but the reverse ; this would not correspond with his oracles, his verbal declarations, but contradict them. We may therefore certainly conclude, on the other hand, that in God's progressive dealings with his creatures, that transcendently excellent and glorious disposition of the divine Mind, whereby he holds all moral evil in the greatest possible abhorrence, will be continually appearing in more lively and glowing colours.



To suppose that this will certainly be the case, is perfectly correspondent with what the holy Scriptures teach us must originally have been the design of God in giving existence to moral creatures. While, on the other hand, should the divine government, in its progressive steps, impress the minds of creatures, with no deeper and more affecting sense of his infinite purity and hatred of iniquity; the whole moral character of the great governor of the world must, of necessity, suffer; and appear not uniform, nor wholly without defect.

## CHAPTER II.

*An inquiry into the original ground of the necessity of an atonement, in order to the forgiveness of sin.*

**T**HE original design of God, in the creation of the world, will naturally lead us to suppose that a disposition to exhibit his character in its true colours, was the cause of his requiring an atonement for sin, before he would exercise pardoning mercy. Since this was God's original End in creation; this must, also, be the governing principle in all his future administration. Of course, therefore, the true reason why God required an atonement for sin was, that *the real disposition of his own infinite mind, toward such an object, might appear; even though he pardoned and saved the sinner.* Could the character of God, the disposition of the divine mind both toward holiness and sin, otherwise appear to equal advantage; there is not the least reason to imagine that he would ever have required an atonement: Because God never will be at expence, where no advantage is gained. But, to say that *this* is the con-  
sideration

sideration which originally made an atonement necessary; is the same as to say that the necessity of it in order to a proper exercise of mercy, arose from the very nature of the divine character, and the essential perfection of God. For it is the essential perfection of the divine nature, and the genuine character of God, that are to be displayed in all his works and government.

It is reasonable to suppose that God required an atonement for sin, that his creatures might be sensible of the abhorrence he has of it, notwithstanding the forgiveness he is pleased to exercise toward the sinner. The End which God had in view, in the creation of the world; forbids the exercise of mercy toward sinners, in such a way as naturally tends to diminish the ideas of their infinite guilt and ill desert in his sight. As the real aversion of the divine mind from sin is infinite, it evidently became his character to adopt some measures, in his providence; effectually to convince his creatures that this aversion still subsists, in all its strength, even though he pardons the sinner. Otherwise, the character of God would, of necessity, be misapprehended by his creatures; and the nature of his mercy be misunderstood.

We may confide in it that nothing will ever take place in the divine government, which will tend to render the spotless holiness of God in the least degree suspicious; or represent him less an enemy to sin, than a friend to virtue. And that, in order to this, there was originally in the nature of things, a necessity of an atonement, before mercy could be exercised in the pardon of the sinner; will appear from the following considerations, viz,

I. SHOULD God pardon *absolutely*, or without adopting measures, at the same time, to convince his creatures of his infinite hatred of iniquity; his regards to the good of the great community over which he presides, would necessarily appear to his creatures to be defective.

It is essential to the goodness of a Governor, or King, to guard the rights, secure the peace, and promote the prosperity of his subjects. No one can be called a good Governor, who doth not exercise his supremacy and authority, in framing and executing laws for the protection and safety of his subjects. It is as essential to the character of a good Ruler, to punish vice, as to reward virtue; to avenge the wrongs of his subjects, as to secure their interests: Yea, the *former* is essential to the *latter*; since, only the fear of punishment restrains wicked men from violence. Should a ruler suffer crimes to go unpunished; the laws, however good and righteous in themselves, would presently lose their authority; and government fall into contempt. Laws have no force, any further than they are carried into execution; and authority loses its respect whenever it ceases to be exercised. Whenever the supreme Magistrate neglects the execution of the laws, he loses the confidence of the people; and his regard to the public welfare becomes suspected. No one can confide in his public spirit, when he suffers the disturbers of the peace to go unpunished: For ideas of true regard to public good, as necessarily connect punishments with crimes, as rewards with virtue.

THE confidence of a community in the character of a Governor, arises, in a great measure, from the apprehensions they have of his sincere, benevolent



benevolent regards to the general good. And they can no further confide in his regards to the public good, than they believe him to be averse from every thing that injures the public. As, it is impossible that the *love of virtue*, in any being whatever, should exceed his *hatred of vice*; it is impossible for any one to give evidence of the *former*, when, the object being presented, he neglects expressing the *latter*, in ways becoming his character.

SHOULD God pardon the sinner, without taking effectual measures to minister conviction of his hatred of his sins; the evidence of his love to the public good, would necessarily be defective. This, of course, would be a mode of administration exceedingly inconsistent with his original design in the creation and government of the world.

For,

II. IF God should pardon sin without an atonement, he could not be believed to hate iniquity.

THE views which God has of the characters of his creatures, and the affection of his mind respecting them, can be no where so clearly seen, as in the treatment he actually gives them. God is a spirit, invisible to men; and, cannot be known intuitively by his creatures. We can see him only in his word and works; and, when we consider him as the parent and fountain of all being and good; and, ourselves as the mere creatures of his power, most absolutely dependent on him; it will be natural for us to suppose that his *ultimate treatment of us* affords the best rule whereby we may judge of the light in which he views our characters; and of the disposition he entertains towards us. And though *words*

are

are significant, they are yet less so than *actions*. 'Tis a common, and a just observation, that actions speak louder than words: Yea, a maxim on which we so firmly rely, that we give the whole weight to the former, when they contradict the latter. All agree that the mind and will of God may be intelligibly expressed in words. Yet, no one will deny that they may be written in much deeper and more legible characters, in the sensible pleasures and pains which he may bestow, or inflict upon us. Therefore, the evidence of God's love of virtue, and his hatred of vice, must ultimately be derived from the treatment he gives his creatures. In this we ultimately and most sensibly, discover his view of the characters of his creatures, and the estimation in which he holds them: And, in this we most clearly discover the feelings of the divine mind toward virtue and vice.

If the views which the supreme Being entertains of *characters*, and the feelings of his mind towards those who sustain them, are most clearly discovered in the *treatment* of his creatures; in the natural good and evil he ultimately brings upon them: Then, of course, where the treatment is the same, we are to judge that the feelings, the disposition, of the divine mind toward the objects, are also the same: What but this can be the rule of our judgment? If God's treatment be the best and ultimate rule of judging; then, similar treatment authorises us to believe that he holds all the subjects of it in equal estimation; and is equally pleased, or displeas'd, with one, as with another. If God should treat the virtuous and vicious alike, from whence could we infer his approbation of the former, or his abhorrence of the latter? If his treatment of them, in his government

government be the same; then, either his government fails of expressing his proper character, or his character is not uniform and perfect. And, if God's *actions and conduct* toward his creatures, do not truly express his character, his mind and will, how shall we know that his *word* does? And by what methods can we ever come to the knowledge of the divine character?

FURTHER; if the treatment God gives his creatures, in his providence, the natural good and evil he confers upon them, be ultimately a certain rule, whereby to judge of his disposition towards them and the views he has of their characters; the consequence will be, that we cannot infer *difference* of character in the subjects, from the *different treatment* they receive at the hand of God. And, if this be the case, then natural evil will, in no case whatever, be a proof of God's displeasure, any more than natural good, a proof of his approbation and favour. And thus shall we be left perfectly in the dark, as to the divine character; having no sure interpreter of the will of God, either in his word, or in his providence.

BUT, if the natural good and evil which God ultimately confers on his creatures, be a certain rule whereby we may judge of the views which he entertains of their characters; it would be inconsistent to suppose that he should ever pardon a sinner, without any atonement; or without taking some effectual methods, in his providence, to discover his infinite hatred of their characters and actions. If the providences of God are expressions of *his own character*, it is inconceivable that he should not in some way or other, in his providence, express the views and feelings of



his mind toward the characters and conduct of sinners. But, if the natural good and evil that are ultimately, and on the whole, brought on creatures, are sure and certain indications of the divine disposition toward them; then, the abhorrence in which God holds the characters of sinners, must of necessity be expressed in some other way, than in evil finally brought upon the sinner himself; in order that it may be consistent with his salvation and with the End of God in the creation of the world, and the invariable rule of his providence, whereby he expresses his own character to the views of his creatures. For, unless this should be done, the pardon and salvation of a sinner, leave us to an utter uncertainty with respect to the divine character itself; whether God were an hater of iniquity; and, of course, whether a lover of righteousness.

II. If God should pardon the sinner, without taking some sufficient and effectual method, at the same time, to discover his infinite hatred of iniquity; if he should treat the clean and the unclean, the virtuous and vicious, alike; we should have no means left whereby to determine that he held their characters in any different estimation; and, either approved, or disapproved the one, more than the other. Therefore, such a mode of providence would be inconsistent with the End which God had in view, both in the creation and government of the world; which was to manifest his own glory, and to display his own infinitely holy and virtuous character.

III. The government of God could not be respectable, should he pardon the sinner, without discovering, at the same time his infinite hatred  
of

of his sins ; and the perfect abhorrence he hath of his character.

THE supreme Being cannot be *regarded* as a Governor, any further than he is believed to hate iniquity. And he cannot be believed to hate iniquity, when it actually takes place among his creatures, any further than his hatred is, in some way or other, expressed. But, if God, in his providence, should treat the virtuous and the vicious alike ; making no difference between the clean and the unclean, the holy and the profane ; if he should confer the same good upon the one, as upon the other, taking no measures in his providence, to show that he regarded the character of the one, in any different light from that of the other : his government would, of necessity, lose its force, and be no restraint upon his creatures.

No one can *respect* a government which provides no punishment for the wicked. And, whatever punishments be provided by *law*, if the executive authority neglect the execution, the government must, of necessity, fall into contempt. No sooner, therefore, will God cease to discover his hatred of the rebellion and wickedness of his creatures, than he loses his authority, and renders his benevolence and good-will justly suspicious. But if the treatment God gives his creatures, in the good and the evil he confers upon them, be sure indications of the views he entertains of their characters ; for him to pardon the sinner without an atonement, or without taking some effectual measures to discover his hatred of his sins ; must necessarily injure his character, weaken his authority, and bring his government into contempt.



IV. FOR God to pardon the sinner without an atonement, would be inconsistent with the true spirit and import of his holy law.

IF God's written law expresseth his true character, and is a genuine transcript of his moral perfection; we may confide in it that his whole government will be administered in perfect conformity to it. The government of God can no more vary from the true import of the law, than God can vary from himself. If the moral law expresses the true character of God, his moral government will express the same, and will therefore be perfectly of a piece with the law.

RESPECTING the written moral law, we are to note the following things, viz.

1. THAT it abounds with pains and penalties, and those too of a very awful nature; threatening death, even eternal destruction, for every transgression. It curseth every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.† It makes no provision for pardon, and gives not the least hope of mercy, in any case, or on any condition whatever. But most explicitly and unconditionally condemns every transgressor, without one exception, to everlasting misery. That this is the unequivocal language of the law, it is presumed no one will deny. This is the law which expresseth the true character of God; which is a transcript of his essential moral perfection. This is a law which expresses the mind and will of God, the very feelings of his heart.

2. THE penalties, or sanctions of the law, express an exceeding high degree of righteous anger and indignation, in the divine mind, against the sinner. They express *in words* that same displeasure

† Galat. 3. 10.

pleasure which will appear, in *effects* in the eternal torments of sinners. When God actually inflicts eternal torments on the sinner, he will no more than *act-out* the same disposition, or character, which is expressed in *words* in the threatenings of the law.

If the threatenings of the law do not express divine anger, it is impossible for *words* to do it. If these do not paint displeasure, it is not in the power of *language* to paint it. If the *language* of the divine law is equivocal, the *providences* of God may be equally so: And all those dreadful punishments which will hereafter be inflicted on his enemies, will not afford unequivocal evidence of the real indignation of God. For eternal torments inflicted on sinners, by the great Governor of the world, express nothing in *action*, but what the threatenings of the law express in *words*.

3. We are to note that the principal importance of the *penalty*, as well as of the *precepts* of the law, consists in its expressing the real character of God. What, above every thing else, makes the penalties of the law necessary and important, is, that they express the purity of the divine mind, and his unalterable and infinite aversion from all iniquity. This is the grand consideration which makes punishments necessary in the divine government. The misery of a creature, merely in itself, answers no valuable end: And were it not a glass in which God's infinite hatred of sin is seen, it never would be inflicted. As the great End of God in all his other works, is to manifest his own excellent character; so it is in inflicting punishments upon offenders. And no further than punishments answer the end of exhibiting a disposition that really hath existence in the divine mind, will they ever be inflicted.

Now

Now if it be true that the *law* represents the Governor of the world as being indeed angry, and that in a very high degree with the sinner; it is easy to see that his *government* would not correspond with it, should he pardon the transgressor without exhibiting at the same time, in a sensible manner, his righteous anger against him for his sins. A method of administration which *exhibits anger against sin*, is directly counter to that which *doth not exhibit anger against it*. If, therefore, the divine law denounces curses against the sinner; and as far as words can do it, exhibits divine anger against him; it is manifest that the forgiveness of the sinner, without testifying, at the same time, in some proper and convincing way, an abhorrence of his character and wickedness, would counteract both the letter and the manifest import of the divine law:—Unless *pardon*ing and *punish*ing, doing *good* and doing *evil* to the creature, naturally express one and the same view of his character and deserts; and the same degree of pleasedness or displeasèdness with him. It is hence evident, that it could not have been consistent with that character of God which is exhibited in the law, to pardon the sinner without an atonement; unless *disregard*ing crimes and *punish*ing them, treating the same persons, and that too under the same circumstances, as *friends* or as *enemies*, uniformly exhibit one and the same excellent character.

When God has devised a course in his providence, wherein he exhibits sensible conviction of his hatred of iniquity; the pardon of the sinner cannot counteract the spirit of that law which exhibits the same disposition, in the divine mind, towards the offender: Especially when the great  
end



end and excellency of the law consists in its making a true exhibition of the divine moral character; and *this* is the great consideration which makes it important that government should be administered in conformity to the law. In whatever course an uniformity of character with what originally appears in the law, is preserved in administration, the ends of divine government are answered, and the honour of the lawgiver secured. But unless dispensing rewards and punishments indiscriminately to the *good* and to the *bad*, naturally exhibits the same character, and pictures the same disposition which appears in the *promises* and in the *threatnings* of the law; it must of necessity be inconsistent with the law, to pardon the sinner without an atonement; or without ministering, at the same time, effectual conviction of God's infinite hatred of his sins.

If it be not necessary to the honour of the divine character and government, that God should exhibit his wrath in some sensible fruits against sinners, it is not necessary that he should threaten it. Nothing need be threatened in the law, which is not necessary to be exhibited in government. Uniformity of character cannot require that anger should be expressed in *words*, where there is no necessity of exhibiting it in fruits in *government*. For in cases wherein it is not necessary to the honour of the divine character, to witness anger by sensible fruits, it cannot be that anger should exist in the divine mind. And to suppose that God threatens his creatures with his anger, in cases wherein he hath in reality no anger against them; at once denies the moral law to be an expression of the mind and will of God—a transcript of his moral perfection. But it is obvious,

obvious, at first view, that the act of *pardon*ing, that is, saving a person, and receiving him to the enjoyment of the everlasting favour of God, doth not in itself discover any anger or wrath: Consequently, consistently with the moral law, this never can be done without God's exhibiting his anger against the sinner, in sensible fruits, in some other way.

FURTHER; for God to save sinners of mankind without an atonement, would suppose the *law* and the *gospel* to speak a different language, and exhibit characters exceedingly diverse, one from the other. It would make the former breathe nothing but indignation, where the latter speaks nothing but peace, comfort and good. And therefore, on this supposition, the *gospel*, instead of establishing, would make void the *law*.

It hence appears to be as essential to the honour of the divine government, and to an uniformity of character in God, that he should exhibit anger in sensible fruits against sin, in every instance wherein it takes place; as that, in sensible fruits, he should exhibit his approbation of righteousness. God hath as real displeasure against sinners, as he hath approbation of the righteous: The former is as essential to the perfection and glory of the divine character, as the latter. That the *government* of God, therefore, may express his real character, and *that*, too, in the same point of light in which it is exhibited in the *law*; it is as necessary that he should express anger against the sinner, in his administration of government, as approbation of the righteous.

THEREFORE is it necessary, in order to a consistent exercise of mercy, that the honour of the  
law



law should be maintained: and that the government of God, in every instance, should be expressive of the same disposition which the law, taken in all its parts, naturally exhibits. It is necessary that the supreme Ruler of the universe should appear, in his administration, equally to respect the *penal* as the *preceptive* parts of his law; and, pay as much regard to the threatenings of *punishment*, as to the promises of *reward*. And in whatever way this is done, in God's conduct toward his creatures, the ends of divine government are answered; and, all the good effected which naturally flow from a display of his true and proper character.

THE penalties of the law, we are to remember, *express the displeasure of the lawgiver in the pain and sufferings of the transgressor*. But however closely and inseparably these two objects may be connected together; they are yet really two, and capable of an entirely distinct and separate consideration. And, as these objects are *two*, they are in themselves considered, of very different importance; and of course, the penalties of the law must be of infinitely greater importance as being expressive of God's *righteous displeasure against sin*, than as bringing *pain and torment on the sinner*. Accordingly, the great ends of divine government, which are to make a true and proper exhibition of the divine character, cannot be answered, whatever be the fate of the sinner, without convincing testimonies to the world, of God's infinite purity and hatred of iniquity. The clearer views we have of the importance of the divine character, and of the original designs of the supreme Being in the creation of the world; the more sensibly shall we discern the necessity of an atonement, in order to the exercise of pardon-

ing mercy: And, the more clearly shall we discover the inconsistency of forgiveness with the true spirit and import of the law, unless full conviction be exhibited, in the moral government of God, of his infinite hatred of iniquity.

FROM this view of the necessity of an atonement, in order to a consistent exercise of mercy, the following observations naturally flow, viz.

I. THAT the honour of the divine law, agreeably to the true spirit and import of it, is fully preserved in the government of God, when his displeasure against sin is made to appear, to equal advantage, as it doth in the execution of the penalties of the law; *in whatever way it be done.* And it appears, on the other hand, that whatever method of administration would throw a veil over God's hatred of iniquity, and render it more obscure to the views of creatures than it would be in the execution of its penalties; would dishonour the law itself; and naturally tend to bring it into contempt. The law is really honoured, when that character of God which is exhibited in the various parts of it, is supported and maintained in his government. Therefore, the penalty of the law is really answered, and its demands satisfied, whenever God's hatred of iniquity is as clearly exhibited in acts of government, as it is expressed in the language of the law, *in whatever way this be done.* The law of God is satisfied and its penalties answered *in the final condemnation of the sinner,* only because the true character of God is herein visibly manifested, and his just displeasure against iniquity clearly discovered: At least, this is the most important and valuable end that is answered by the sinner's final destruction, Were not this the case, the execution of punitive justice would not be to the glory of God; because it would

not

not serve to display the true beauties of his infinitely excellent and glorious character.

THAT the moral character of God should be truly delineated in his government, is what is of primary and principal importance; because, with this is certainly connected the order, the harmony, and the greatest good, of the universe. The character of God being infinitely excellent, and in itself most perfectly harmonious; when it is truly delineated in his government, must of necessity be productive of the greatest good and harmony among his creatures. To manifest the real excellencies of the divine character, therefore, it was that the law was originally given; and, for the same end was it established by such awful sanctions. The honour of the law of course is evidently maintained, and the ends of government answered, when that character, with which the supreme Ruler invests himself in the various parts of his law, is exhibited and supported in administration. So that whenever God's just and real displeasure against sin, is exhibited in some other way, to equal advantage as it would be in the final destruction of the sinner; atonement is then made for his sins, and a door opened for the exercise of pardoning mercy.

2. It would be as inconsistent with the design of God, in the government of the world, to suffer the sins of his creatures to pass unnoticed, as their virtue to go unrewarded. The end of God in his moral government, as much requires that he should testify his hatred of iniquity, as his love of holiness. And if the moral government of God be designed truly to delineate his character; if we are here to expect a sensible discovery of the feelings, the disposition, of his own infinite mind, toward the several characters of his creatures



creatures ; it must appear, every way, as inconsistent for God to neglect expressing his righteous displeasure against *vice* ; as his approbation of *virtue* : God's *hatred* of the former, is as real and immutable, as his *love* of the latter : That mode of administration, therefore, toward sinners, which would not sensibly delineate and express the former, would no more comport with the character and designs of God, than that which should leave the latter undiscovered.

If these things are so, it will be as inconsistent with the attributes of God, and the great end which he hath in view in the government of the world, to suffer *one sin* to pass without expressing, in some convincing manner his hatred of it ; as to suffer virtue to go unrewarded. Not only so, but it will, on these principles, be essential to the divine glory, that the moral government of God should be as *full and sensible an expression* of his abhorrence of every impure character among his creatures, as of his approbation of the conduct of *all such* as never rebelled against him. If the moral government of God should not be administered in such a manner as sensibly to express this to the views of his creatures ; it would not exhibit his *true character*, the real and infinitely excellent disposition of his own holy mind.

3. It appears from what hath been already observed, that the *atonement* had a more immediate and direct relation to the *penal part* of the divine law.

It is unquestionably true that Christ was set forth to be a propitiation to declare God's *righteousness* ; and the great ends of *righteousness* required that there should be an atonement for sin, in order to prepare the way for its remission. But it

is to be remembered, it was the righteousness of God as it related to the execution of threatened and deserved punishment, that needed to be declared, in order to the exercise of pardoning mercy; and not as it related to the bestowment of rewards:—Righteousness, as it respected rendering vengeance to enemies; not favour and protection to friends. God's favour for the righteous, and his approbation of *their* characters, would not have been rendered suspicious by a total neglect to execute punitive justice;—unless, indeed, his benevolent regards to *their* best interest, and his *distinguishing* approbation of *their* characters, should become suspicious, by his neglect to avenge them on their adversaries. But the very supposition of a possibility that God's benevolent regards to the righteous, should be rendered doubtful by his neglecting to punish the wicked, strongly implies that it was the righteousness of God *as it relates to the execution of punishment* that needed to be declared, in order to the pardon of the sinner.

HAD vengeance against God's enemies never been displayed; every blessing which obedience could have merited, and which in that case could have been enjoyed, might nevertheless be bestowed. So that the Deity could not justly have been impeached as being deficient in his regards to the *righteous*, had he pardoned sin without an atonement: For as far as *righteousness* in a governor relates to approving and rewarding the obedient, God might nevertheless have appeared perfectly just and righteous.

BUT with respect to *righteousness* as it relates to the execution of deserved punishment, the case is far otherwise. In this regard, when sin had actually



ally taken place, the divine righteousness needed honour and vindication; and necessarily would need them, until it were in some sensible manner exhibited to the views of creatures. For the character of God could not fail of being reproached, as deficient both in his regards to his own authority, and in making a distinction between the holy and the unclean, had he pardoned without a visible exhibition of his hatred of the iniquity of the sinner. And even the obedient part of the universe had no small interest in a display of righteousness *in this regard*; as it could not fail of contributing to their more sensible security under the government of God, and their greater and more respectful reverence of his character.

So that whatever part of the universe were concerned in the displays of divine *righteousness*, in order to the remission of sin; whether it were God himself, and his own infinitely excellent character; or the obedient and virtuous part of creation; still what more immediately and especially concerned both, was, that *righteousness* as it more directly related to the *penalties and sanctions* of the law, should be exhibited and made sensibly to appear.

If it should be urged that the *righteousness of God* in the most large and general sense of the term, might have been sufficiently displayed by some lively exhibition of his regards to the *preceptive parts* of the law; because the *penal* only represent God's love of righteousness in general; still this would be no argument that the atonement did not more immediately respect the penal part of the divine law. For admitting the ultimate use of penalties to be no more than to express God's love of righteousness in general, or  
even

even his love of *obedience*; still they cannot do this, any further than they are regarded and have respect paid to them in the administration of government. If the penalties of the law should not be regarded in the government of God, they could not serve to illustrate his love of *obedience*. For the righteousness of God, as it respects the *precepts* of the law, is as evidently discernible in his regards to the *penalties*; as his righteousness relative to the *penalties* is in his regards to the *precepts*. The Governor of the world as strongly and sensibly manifests his love of *obedience* by *punishing wickedness*, as his hatred of *iniquity* by *rewarding virtue*. And since in the divine view the *precepts* and the *penalties* of the law are both necessary in order to a clear and full discovery of the character and glory of God; it is necessary that both be equally regarded in the administration of government. So that in whatever light we view the matter, it must appear of equal importance that God should manifest his respects to the *penalties* of the law by a *display of anger*; as to the *precepts* by *approbation*. And since both parts of the law are essential to its authority, and to the glory and honour of its giver; it is also necessary that the *government* of God should appear to correspond with both; and equally necessary that he should display *vengeance* as bestow *rewards*. Therefore is it manifest that the divine righteousness, particularly as it relates to the execution of *vengeance*, was what peculiarly needed to be honoured, in order to a consistent and justifiable exercise of *mercy* toward *sinners*.

4. As far as God's love of *righteousness* and *hatred of iniquity* can be separately viewed and distinguished from each other; the great end of the death

death of Christ was to exhibit the *latter*, not the *former*.

THE disposition of the divine mind is perfectly uniform and harmonious. There is nothing in God, or in the disposition of his mind, but benevolence and love. Yet general goodness operates in a different manner toward different objects; and obtains different epithets, according to these severally different operations. Should we, for instance, conceive no different ideas of divine *justice* from those which we entertain of divine *mercy*; it is evident we should have no proper and adequate conceptions of *either*. Or should we form no different ideas of God's *love of virtue*, and of his *hatred of vice*; it is manifest that we should view him as being *indifferent* to virtue and vice. Yet the very different ways in which God's *love of virtue* and his *hatred of vice* express themselves in fruits; and the extremely different effects they produce in the subjects on whom they are severally displayed, naturally lead us to view them as, in some respects, exceedingly different from each other: And *that* however obviously they discover, in their several operations, beautiful harmony and uniformity in the disposition of the divine mind.

SEEING therefore the existence of moral evil naturally furnished occasion for a display of God's *hatred of iniquity*, and evidently called for it; this would lead us to view the death of Christ as being designed more immediately and directly to make a visible discovery of the anger of God against sin.

THEREFORE, we may reasonably suppose, it is that the people of Christ are so often spoken of as being redeemed by his *blood*; as though *his life*  
went



went for *theirs*. The scriptures represent the church of God as being *purchased with his own blood*<sup>1</sup>—*redeemed through the blood of Christ*<sup>2</sup>—*made nigh by his blood*,<sup>3</sup> &c. So the *blood* of his cross is that by which he is said to make *peace*.<sup>4</sup> And the church above is represented as celebrating Christ for his worthiness to open the book, and disclose the future state of the church and world, because he was slain and had redeemed her to God by his *blood*.<sup>5</sup> In this view of the matter the Apostle asserts that *without shedding of blood* there is no remission.<sup>6</sup> The reason why so much efficacy is ascribed to *blood* evidently is, that it is the life.<sup>7</sup> And therefore it is that the *blood* makes atonement.<sup>8</sup>

TAKING away the life is the most strong and sensible expression of displeasure that is ever visible to us. That displeasure which puts a period to the life, we view as of the highest kind. Therefore doth the *death* of Christ more directly exhibit the *anger* of God than his *love*: As that affection of the divine mind which is termed *anger* especially needed to be exhibited in order to a proper exercise of mercy. Virtue and goodness in the creature, furnish occasion for the exercise and manifestation of complacency and love; but vice for the display of anger. And had the occasion for the latter been omitted by the great Governor of the world, when rebellion had actually taken place, we cannot conceive how it would have been for the glory of God to pardon the sinner, or how he could have been just in justifying the ungodly.

P. . . . . 5. . . . .

<sup>1</sup> Acts, 20. 28. <sup>2</sup> Ephes. 1. 7. <sup>3</sup> chap. 2. 13. <sup>4</sup> Colossians, 1. 20. <sup>5</sup> Rev. 5. 9. <sup>6</sup> Heb. 9. 22. <sup>7</sup> Gen. 9. 4. <sup>8</sup> Leviticus, 17. 11.

5. It appears from the nature of God's design in creation, and from the ground on which an atonement became necessary, that the great end of the coming and death of Christ was not to give evidence of the equity and righteousness of the moral law; but rather to exhibit in its proper colours, the disposition of the divine mind toward us for breaking it. The *righteousness of the law*, merely as a *rule*, and the *disposition of the divine mind* toward creatures who violate it; are distinct objects which are to be separately considered. The objects are as perfectly different from each other, as the *divine Mind itself* and any of those *media* or objects through which it is seen. And in regard of these two different objects, when viewed in a separate light, it is to be remembered that, in real importance, the *former* is infinitely exceeded by the *latter*. However truly, therefore, a testimony to the righteousness of God's law *as a rule of life*, might be contained in the design of the coming and death of Christ; a discovery of the divine disposition toward men for *violating* it, was what, nevertheless, made an infinitely greater part of the design of Christ's work than the other.

To suppose that the principal design of the coming of Christ, was to exhibit evidence to the consciences of men, of the righteousness and equity of the divine law, either as a *rule* of government for God, nor of conduct for us; for aught we can see, would be rather a reproach, than an honour to the divine character. For this would suppose that the law of God, though originally inscribed in the fullest manner that it could be on the hearts of men, was nevertheless of such a nature and extent that the creature could see neither the propriety of God's governing by it, nor the reason



reason of his own obligation to obey it: And therefore, that the law of God was not originally fitted to discover the true beauties of the divine character.

No rule or law can be good, which is either above the natural abilities and power, or not suited to the situation and circumstances of the creatures who are placed under it. Such a law could not manifest the excellency of the Creator to the view of the creature. For these reasons it must be unsuitable, both as a rule of government for the former and of conduct for the latter. Both these considerations lead us to conclude that no defects of this kind could be originally attributed to the divine law. But if the moral law is in its own nature fit to be regarded by the supreme Being as a rule of government over his creatures; and by men as a rule of their own conduct; and in this way calculated to exhibit to the views of creatures the real excellencies of the divine character; it must be unquestionably true that man, in his original state, was fully capable of seeing the law to be wholly equitable and righteous. And if men were originally capable of this, it now requires, and never did, or will, require any thing more than *candour* of mind, to enable any one to discover it.

THESE things being so, it is easy to see that conviction of the righteousness of the law might be wrought in the consciences of men, in a way infinitely less expensive than by the coming and death of the Son of God: Yea, were there no other ground of conviction in the case, this remarkable event would be far from affording it. For so long as we judge a rule itself to be *bad*, no  
*conduct*

*conduct* of any one formed upon it, will make us believe it to be *good*. While we dispute the righteousness of the rule *given*, we dispute the righteousness of him who *gave it*. And in that case, his *obeying it himself* will no more convince us of its equity, than his administering government *over us* in conformity to it. We may safely conclude, therefore, that to minister conviction to the consciences of men, of the righteousness of the moral law *as a rule*, was not the principal object in view, in the coming and work of Christ.

THERE needed no such evidence as the obedience and death of Christ, of the righteousness of the moral law, either as a rule of government for God, or of conduct for his creatures. But when men had *violated* the law, there needed visible demonstration of the existence of that displeasure in the divine mind, with which the sinner is *threatened*, in order to convince the creature that the law is indeed a transcript of the divine perfection; and that it truly expresseth the mind and will of God. Otherwise the exercise of pardoning mercy would render it doubtful whether the moral law expressed the divine character, and is really *in every part* equitable, even in the view of God. The exercise of mercy, therefore, without a sensible exhibition of that divine wrath which is threatened in the law, would give abundant occasion to call in question the perfect real conformity of the *divine will*, to that moral law which he has given us. This consequently could in no wise be for the glory of God. Once more,

6. It appears from the preceding observations that to revive *natural religion*, the knowledge of which was nearly eradicated from the human mind, was far from being the principal object of the coming and death of Christ.

To inscribe the original law of our nature on the hearts of men, is every where in scripture represented as a work of God's holy Spirit. And this holy Spirit, in these operations on the minds of men, we are taught to believe, proceeds from the *Father and the Son*; and is sent by the Father *in the name of the Son*.\* It is a great and inestimable favour to have the holy Spirit sent into the hearts of men, to teach them and lead them into the truth, and revive those original notices of God and duty, which have been nearly obliterated from the human mind, by the fall. And if such a favour as this could have been bestowed otherwise than as the fruit of the atonement; every other blessing which is promised in the gospel, might with equal propriety; and so sinners of mankind might have been saved without an atonement. Had there been no necessity that something should be previously done to witness God's irreconcilable aversion from sin, before such a favour could be bestowed; the holy Spirit might have been sent in his enlightening and sanctifying operations: And of course, all the valuable ends which are now actually answered *by the work of Christ and the consequent gifts of the Spirit*, might have been fully accomplished without his coming and death. Yea, all these valuable ends might have been brought about to much better advantage, and in a way much more to the glory of the divine character *without* than *by* the death of Christ: Because that way of bringing about *any* good which is least expensive or attended with the least evil and suffering; is both most advantageous to the *creature*, and honourable to the *Creator*.

THAT the great end of the coming and death of Christ was to revive the knowledge of *natural religion*

\* See *John* 14, 15, 16, 18, 23, 26; and, 15. 26.



*religion* among men, is a supposition which, however it may *connect* the glory of God and the good of the creature, yet evidently throws the greater weight into the scale of human happiness: and is therefore inconsistent with what hath been shown to be the End of God in the creation of the world. For it represents the recovery of sinners as being *in itself* an object of greater importance, than a vindication of the injured honour of God: and implies, that, to support the dignity of the divine character as the supreme Ruler of the Universe, was a matter of inferior consideration.

THAT the government of God may appear respectable, and worthy the high dignity of his character, it is not only necessary that the great laws of his kingdom be perfectly equitable and just; but that the disposition, the spirit, of the supreme Governor appear perfectly to harmonize with them. Otherwise the government of God can no more be either honourable and glorious to himself, or safe and happy to his creatures, than the best civil laws and constitution can, to a community, when they are neglected and overlooked by the executive authority.

In order, therefore, to support the dignity of the divine character as the supreme Governor of the world, it is exceedingly necessary that plenary evidence be exhibited to the universe, of a perfect conformity of the *divine Mind* to the whole of the moral law, the *penal* as well as the *preceptive* parts of it. This, however, could not be done, nor this disposition be *delineated in the divine government*, were mercy exercised toward sinners; unless some *peculiar methods* had been adopted in  
 divine



divine providence; whereby God might sensibly exhibit his infinite hatred of iniquity: And *that* too as a necessary step toward the exercise of pardoning mercy.

### CHAPTER III.

*An inquiry into the design and import of the bloody sacrifices required under the Mosaic dispensation.*

**I**T is evident that *sacrifices* were of much earlier date than the Mosaic law. There is great reason to suppose that they were instituted by God himself, immediately after the fall, on his giving the gracious promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. These several things concur to lead us to suppose that they were originally of divine institution, viz.

THAT sacrifices were in actual use, from the earliest ages after the fall. We read that God made coats of skins, and cloathed Adam and Eve,\* who had made themselves naked by their sin. Now there is great reason to suppose that these skins were skins of beasts which were offered in sacrifice to God. And that as God intimated designs of mercy through Christ, to the seed of the woman, he also instituted *sacrifices* as a type of the great sacrifice which was, once for all, offered up to God by Christ; and by which sinners have access to God. Accordingly we find that, very soon, Abel brought of the *firstlings* of his flock, and of the *fat* thereof,† and offered unto God. As early also as the times of Noah we find that the distinction of *clean* and *unclean* beasts, of such as *might* and such as *might* not be offered to God in sacrifice,

\* Genes. 3. 21.

† Genes. 4. 4.

sacrifice, was known; which could not be without a divine revelation. For when Noah entered into the Ark he was commanded of every *clean beast* to take to himself by *sevens*.<sup>1</sup> And when he came out of the Ark, he builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every *clean beast*, and of every *clean fowl* and offered *burnt-offerings* on the altar: And the Lord smelled a sweet savour.<sup>2</sup> On these several accounts the few following things may be observed, viz.

I. THAT though it be not *certain* that those beasts, the skins of which were taken to clothe our first parents, were offered in sacrifice to God; it is yet clear that *Abel* offered the firstlings of his flock in *sacrifice*; because the *fat thereof*, which was afterward, by divine appointment, peculiarly dedicated to God, was offered up. And we find that in after ages, not only the fat of the beast that was offered, was particularly set apart for God,<sup>3</sup> but every *firstling* of *clean beasts* was to be offered in sacrifice to the Lord. Thus it was enjoined on the children of Israel respecting the firstlings of cattle and sheep, that they should remain seven days with the dam; and on the eighth day should be given to God.<sup>4</sup> God claimed a peculiar right in all the first-born: And the firstlings of unclean beasts might be redeemed; but the firstlings of a cow, or a sheep, or a goat, might not on any consideration be redeemed; but must be offered upon the altar, in sacrifice to God.<sup>5</sup> The sacrifice itself and the conformity of so many of its circumstances to the rites which were afterward expressly required by the levitical law, give great reason to suppose that *Abel* had the authority of a divine institution for the offering which he made to God. For,

<sup>1</sup> Genes. 7. 2.    <sup>2</sup> Genes. 8. 20, 21.    <sup>3</sup> Levitic. 3. 16,  
<sup>4</sup> Exod. 22. 30.    <sup>5</sup> Numb. 18. 17.

2. THERE is not the least reason to suppose that sacrificing of beasts could have been acceptable to God, unless it had been authorised by a divine appointment. It was not until after the flood, that mankind had any right to make use of the flesh of beasts for common food. Before this God had given to man only the trees that bore fruit, and the green herb, for meat.<sup>6</sup> But after the flood, he enlarged the grant to Noah who was eminently a type of Christ; and said, "Every  
 " moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you;  
 " even as the green herb have I given you all  
 " things."<sup>7</sup> Whence it appears that man's right of dominion over the beasts, particularly to make use of them for meat, is derived to him through the covenant of grace.

AND, when it is evident, from the holy scriptures, that it is only by Christ that sinners have access to God;<sup>8</sup> and that all those modes of worship, and means of access to him, which are only the fruits of human invention, are abominable in the sight of God;<sup>9</sup> there is not the least reason to suppose that it would ever have entered into the mind of Abel to offer up a *beast* in sacrifice to God; or that he could have thought that such an offering would be accepted, had he been without the authority of divine institution. And much less may we suppose, that had this bodily exercise been a piece of *willworship*, the mere fruit of his own invention, it would ever have found acceptance with God. But,

3. As a further evidence that Abel had divine authority for the sacrifice which he offered to God,

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<sup>6</sup> *Genes.* 1. 29, 30. <sup>7</sup> *Genes.* 9. 3. <sup>8</sup> See *Rom.* 5. 2. <sup>9</sup> *Ephes.* 2. 18. *Acts.* 4. 12. <sup>9</sup> *Isa.* 29. 13. *Mark.* 7. 7.

we are expressly told, that he made his offering by faith, and thereby obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.\* His making his offering by faith, implies that he believed that he might approach his maker in this way: For, as the apostle presently asserts, "he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." But it is manifest that he could not have the least reason from any consideration whatever, for *this belief*, but what was derived from some divine intimation. Wherefore Abel's faith by which he made his offering, and God's acceptance of it, and witness that he was righteous, are a sufficient stamp of divine authority for his offering. Abel made his offering by faith, just in the same sense as Moses "kept the passover by faith, and the sprinkling of blood;"† which had the express authority of a divine institution.

BUT be this as it may, it is sufficiently clear from the New Testament, that the sacrifices of the *Mosaic institution* were designed to prefigure the sacrifice of Christ, that lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. This is fully proved by the Apostle, particularly in the ninth chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews. We may rationally expect, therefore, to find the design and import of *sacrifices* more fully explained, under that dispensation which was particularly intended to prepare the way for the coming and work of Christ.

It appears that the sacrifices of the levitical institution were of *two* sorts; and generally of a double

\* Heb. 11. 4.

† Heb. 11. 28.



double import: *One* was as an atonement for sin, or a figurative way of expiating crimes; the *other* an expression of the worship and homage due from creatures to their Creator. And it was by sacrifices of the *former* kind, that men had access to God for acceptance of the *latter*.<sup>2</sup> In allusion to the legal sacrifices in this latter sense, all acts of divine worship are stiled *sacrifices*.<sup>3</sup> Thus David saith, "the *sacrifices* of God are a broken spirit."<sup>3</sup> And Paul beseeches christians, by the mercies of God, to present their bodies a *living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable to God.<sup>4</sup> But the import of sacrifices in this regard, doth not particularly concern our present inquiry. As it was the bloody sacrifices for sin that typified the sacrifice of Christ, what it especially concerns us to understand, is the proper and true import of sacrifices as they were used, by divine appointment, *for making atonement for sin, or as a mean of reconciliation.*

In regard of *these sacrifices*, we find that it was established as an invariable and universal rule, that whatever was taken from the herd, or from the flock, should be brought to the door of the tabernacle; and there the offender was to lay his hand on the head of the beast which was to be sacrificed, and kill it before the Lord; and the priests were to take of the blood of the beast, and sprinkle it round about upon the altar. Thus, as soon as the tabernacle was erected in the wilderness, we are told that "The LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, speak unto the

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<sup>2</sup> See more particularly, *Heb.* 10. 1. 2. <sup>3</sup> *Psa.* 51. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Rom.* 12. 1.

“ the children of Israel and say unto them, if  
 “ any man of you bring an offering unto the  
 “ Lord; ye shall bring your offering of the cat-  
 “ tle, even of the herd, and of the flock. And  
 “ if his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd,  
 “ let him offer a male without blemish : he shall  
 “ offer it of his own voluntary will, at the door  
 “ of the tabernacle of the congregation before  
 “ the Lord. And he shall put his hand upon the  
 “ head of the burnt-offering : and it shall be ac-  
 “ cepted for him to make atonement. And he shall  
 “ kill the bullock before the Lord : And the  
 “ priests, Aaron’s sons, shall bring the blood,  
 “ and sprinkle the blood round about upon the  
 “ altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of  
 “ the congregation.”<sup>1</sup> The law respecting a

peace offering, whether it be of the herd, or of  
 the flock, is the same; and the same form and  
 ceremonies are to be observed concerning it.<sup>2</sup>

An atonement for sins of ignorance, whether  
 committed by the *Priest*, by a *Ruler*, or by a *private person*, is to be made in the same way; and  
 all the same ceremonies punctually to be observed  
 in the offering: And if it be by the *whole congrega-*  
*tion*; the *Elders* of the congregation are to lay  
 their hands on the head of the bullock before the  
 Lord.<sup>3</sup> And on the great day of yearly sacrifice,  
 when an atonement was to be made for the whole  
 congregation, by the offering of *two goats*, one  
 for a *sin-offering* and the other for a *scape-goat*;   
 the priest was to lay both his hands on the head  
 of the scape-goat, and *confess over him all the*  
*iniquities of the children of Israel; and all their*  
*transgressions, in all their sins.*<sup>4</sup> These were sta-  
 tutes

<sup>1</sup> Levit. i. 1.—5.    <sup>2</sup> See Chap. 3. 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Levit. 4. throughout.    <sup>4</sup> Levit. 16. 21.

tutes and ordinances to be observed by the children of Israel forever, in all their generations.

THESE institutions were expressive and significant; and the language and import of them not hard to be understood. For it is to be noted,

I. THAT the reason why the blood was so essential a part of the sacrifice, was that it eminently signifies the *life*. Accordingly, when *Cain* had slain his brother, God charges the murder upon him in these words, "What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's *blood* crieth unto me from the ground."<sup>1</sup> The first express law we have in the holy scriptures against murder, is also conceived in these terms, "Whosoever sheddeth man's *blood*, by man shall his *blood* be shed."<sup>2</sup> This seems to have been the reason why *blood* was excepted out of that grant which was first made to men, of the brutal creation for food. "Every moving thing that liveth," said the donor, "shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh *with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof*, shall you not eat."<sup>3</sup> The reason why blood, which is the life, might not be eaten, is given where God saith, "I will even set my face against the soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among my people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you *upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the BLOOD that maketh an atonement for the soul.*"<sup>4</sup> Therefore sprinkling the *blood* of the sacrifice round about upon the altar, figuratively imported the offering

<sup>1</sup> Genes. 4. 10.    <sup>2</sup> Genes. 9. 6.    <sup>3</sup> Genes. 9. 3#.    <sup>4</sup> Levit. 17. 11.

ing up of the life to the Lord upon his altar, to be consumed by fire.

II. LAYING the hand on the head of the beast that was to be sacrificed, implied *confession of sin and guilt in the sight of God*. On the great day of yearly atonement for sin, the high Priest was expressly required to "lay both his hands on the head of the scape-goat; and *confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.*" So, when any private person brought his offering for sin; and laying his hand on the head of the beast, delivered it up for a burnt-offering to be made upon the altar; the several ceremonies which were to be observed in the case, clearly implied *confession of sin, and desert of evil at the hand of God*. And as the life of the transgressor is forfeited by sin, God's acceptance of the life of the beast under these circumstances, plainly contains the idea that the beast is substituted in the room of him who offers it; and that it dies and is consumed by fire on the altar of the Lord, instead of the transgressor. When it is expressly asserted that it is the *blood*, or the *life* that makes the atonement, and the sinner, whose life is forfeited, is pardoned and accepted upon his offering *the life of the beast*, over which he has confessed his own sins, on the Lord's altar; it will be exceedingly natural to suppose that the beast which is sacrificed is, by divine appointment, substituted to die and be consumed in the room of the sinner. The killing and sacrificing the beast which was brought as an offering for sin, to make atonement, together with the several ceremonies to be observed relative to it, very significantly expressed both the sinner's conviction



conviction that he himself deserved death; and his faith in the merciful acceptance of God of a substitute instead of the person of the transgressor.

III. THE fire that consumed the sacrifices which were offered upon the altar, was significant of divine anger. That this was the case, appears from the following considerations, viz.

I. NOTHING gives a more acute and pungent sensation of pain than fire. We have no ideas of greater bodily torment than may be produced by fire. Accordingly it is a metaphor abundantly made use of, in the holy scriptures, to express the awful nature and greatness of divine anger; and the intolerable distress it will bring on those upon whom it finally falls. No term is more frequently made use of, in the word of God, to express divine anger, than *fire*. Thus the supreme Being calls upon his people, by the prophet, “circumcise  
“ yourselves to the Lord, and take away the  
“ foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and  
“ inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my fury come  
“ forth like *fire*, and burn that none can quench  
“ it, because of the evil of your doings.”<sup>o</sup> Again;  
“ O house of David, thus saith the Lord, exe-  
“ cute judgment in the morning, and deliver  
“ him that is spoiled out of the hand of the op-  
“ pressor, lest my fury go out like *fire*, and burn  
“ that none can quench it—”<sup>1</sup> And thus the  
same prophet laments the evils which God, in his  
righteous anger, had brought on his people Is-  
rael: “ He hath cut off in his fierce anger all  
“ the horn of Israel: he hath drawn back his  
“ right hand from before the enemy, and he  
burned

<sup>o</sup> *Jerem.* 4. 4.    <sup>1</sup> *Jerem.* 21. 12.

“ burned against Jacob like a *flaming fire* which  
 “ devoureth round about.”<sup>2</sup> God exhibits his  
 anger under the same metaphor by another of the  
 prophets, when he says to the people, “ I will  
 “ pour out mine indignation upon thee, I will  
 “ blow against thee in the *fire of my wrath*, and  
 “ deliver thee into the hand of brutish men, and  
 “ skilful to destroy. Thou shalt be for fuel to  
 “ the *fire*.”<sup>3</sup> Thus also the heathen are threat-  
 ned, “ Surely in the *fire* of my jealousy have I  
 “ spoken against the residue of the heathen,” &c.<sup>4</sup>  
 Therefore the prophet Amos exhorts, “ Seek the  
 “ Lord and ye shall live, lest he break out like  
 “ *fire* in the house of Joseph, and devour it.”<sup>5</sup>  
 In a variety of other places is the same metaphor  
 made use of, in the old testament, to express di-  
 vine anger.

THE same term is abundantly used in the new  
 testament, both by Christ himself, and by the Apo-  
 stles, to denote divine anger, and the awful  
 effects of it upon the enemies of God. Thus  
 Christ saith to his disciples, in explaining the  
 parable of the tares, “ The son of man shall send  
 “ forth his angels, and they shall gather out of  
 “ his kingdom all things that offend, and them  
 “ which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a  
 “ *furnace of fire*; there shall be weeping and  
 “ gnashing of teeth.”<sup>6</sup> He also exhorts, “ If  
 “ thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for  
 “ thee to enter into life maimed, than having two  
 “ hands, to go into hell, into the *fire* that never  
 “ shall be quenched; where their worm dieth  
 “ not, and their *fire* is not quenched.”<sup>7</sup> And  
 when

<sup>2</sup> *Lament.* 2. 3.    <sup>3</sup> *Ezek.* 21. 31, 32.    <sup>4</sup> *Ezek.* 36. 5.  
<sup>5</sup> *Amos*, 5. 6.    <sup>6</sup> *Matt.* 13. 41, 42.    <sup>7</sup> *Mark*, 9. 43, 44.

when he comes to judge the world, he will be “revealed from heaven in *flaming fire* taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>5</sup> When he sits in judgment, the sentence which he finally passes on his enemies will be, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting *fire*, prepared for the devil and his angels.”<sup>6</sup> And, the closing scene of all is, that “the devil who deceived the nations, is cast into the *lake of fire and brimstone*, where the beast and the false prophet are to be tormented day and night, forever and ever.”<sup>7</sup> No expression is more frequently made use of in the sacred writings to denote *divine anger*, than this. And when the anger of God is meant to be represented as exceedingly great, rising even to fury, no other metaphor is so frequently used to represent the terrible nature and awful consequences of it as *fire*. “The mountains quake at him, and the hills *melt*, and the earth is *burnt* at his presence, yea, the world and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like *fire*, and the rocks are thrown down by him.”<sup>8</sup>

AND as the term *fire*, in a great variety of instances, is made use of as a figure in the sacred writings to express *divine anger*; there is *no instance* wherein it evidently appears to be used to express *any other affection* of the divine mind. It is true that John the baptist says, “I indeed baptise you with water—but he that cometh after me—shall baptise you with the holy ghost, and

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“ with

<sup>5</sup> II. *Thes.* 1. 7, 8.    <sup>6</sup> *Matt.* 25. 41.    <sup>7</sup> *Rev.* 20. 10.  
<sup>8</sup> *Nabuz.* 1. 5, 6.

“with fire.”<sup>9</sup> But in representing Christ in this light, the Baptist seems to have reference to the description given, by the ancient prophets, of the character of Christ. For speaking of his coming, it is said, “Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a *refiner’s fire*, and like a *fuller’s sope*. And he shall sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver.” &c.<sup>o</sup> And it was foretold that Christ should “purge the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.”<sup>1</sup> As *fire* is a greater purifier than *water*, for this reason it probably is that the baptism with which Christ baptiseth his people, is represented by *fire*; and this in allusion to the Jewish custom of purifying certain vessels by fire. In this passage, therefore, we find no evidence that any other affection of the divine mind than *anger*, is ever represented under the metaphor of *fire*.

2. THE final destruction of the enemies of God is represented in the holy scriptures, by those sacrifices for sin which were expressly required to be burned. The Psalmist saith, “The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs, they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.”<sup>2</sup> It was an express law of God that no fat of any sin-offering should be eaten, but that it should all be consumed by fire on the altar.<sup>3</sup> But if the fire that burned on the altar, and consumed the sacrifices which were offered upon it, were not an emblem of divine wrath; the consumption of these sacrifices would not have been a figure of the

<sup>9</sup> Matt. 3. 11.    <sup>o</sup> Malachi, 3. 2, 3.    <sup>1</sup> Isai. 44.    <sup>2</sup> Psa. 37. 20.    <sup>3</sup> See Levit. 3. 15, 16. and 6. 30.



the destruction of God's enemies: And there could have been no propriety in representing the latter under the image of the former. Had not David considered the fire on the altar as a figure of divine anger, we have no reason to suppose that he would have represented the effects of this anger on the enemies of God, by the sacrifices which were offered upon the altar of burnt-offering. We have, therefore, reason to conclude that he viewed the latter as an image of the former; which he could not have done with propriety, unless the fire which consumed these sacrifices were a figure of divine anger. God himself seems to represent the matter in the same light, where it is said by the prophet, "The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the *blood of lambs and goats*; *with the fat of kidneys of rams*: For the Lord hath a *sacrifice* in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea."\* Here the awful destruction which was coming on the Idumeans, is represented by their being made a *sacrifice*; and particularly imaged by those parts of the sin-offering which are consumed by fire, upon the Lord's altar.

THUS we see the fire which consumed the sacrifices which were offered upon the altar, represented divine anger; and was an image of the fire of divine wrath. And the holy flame, under the former dispensation, must be continually supplied, and fed with sacrifices; otherwise it would burst forth upon the people, and destroy them. So important is it that there should be an exhibition of divine anger, preparatory to the exercise of pardoning mercy toward the sinner.

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\* *Isaiah*, 34. 6.

THE several ceremonies of the sacrifices for sin, under the levitical institution, taken together, had a language that was very significant. They implied—the divine anger against the sinner, and that in the judgment of God, the transgressor deserved to die, even that death which was the penalty of the law—that the transgressor was of the same sentiments, and entertained the same views of his own character and deserts—that he repented of his sins; and justified God and his law in condemning him—and finally that he fled to, and trusted in; the mercy of God through *an atonement wherein his righteous anger figuratively burned against him*. This seemed to be the plain and natural import of the sacrifices for sin, which were appointed by the levitical law; and of the rites and ceremonies to be observed in offering them.

IV. THE sacrifice of beasts, and the atonement thereby made for sin, was manifestly typical of the great sacrifice of *Christ*, and the atonement which *he* made for the sins of the world.

THAT the ancient tabernacle, and all the rites and forms of that worship which was performed in it, were *typical*, is clearly taught in the New-Testament. For, speaking of this tabernacle, the Apostle says, it was “ a figure for the time then  
 “ present, in which were offered both gifts and  
 “ sacrifices that could not make him that did the  
 “ service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience  
 “ —But *Christ* being come an high priest, by a  
 “ greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made  
 “ with hands, that is to say not of this building;  
 “ neither by *the blood of goats and calves*, but by  
 “ *his own blood* entered in once into the holy  
 “ place,

“ place, having obtained *eternal redemption* for  
 “ us.” On which he reasons thus; “ For if the  
 “ blood of bulls and of goats; and the ashes of  
 “ an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth  
 “ to the purifying of the flesh, how much more  
 “ shall the *blood of Christ*, who through the eter-  
 “ nal spirit offered himself without spot to God,  
 “ purge your conscience from dead works to serve  
 “ the living God.”<sup>1</sup> We here observe that it was  
 the *blood* of the ancient sacrifice that was particu-  
 larly typical; and in *this* the figure of the great  
 sacrifice which taketh away the sins of the world,  
 was especially contained. It was the *blood* of the  
 beast that cleansed from *fleshly impurity*; and it is  
 the *blood* of Christ that purgeth *the conscience from*  
*dead works to serve the living God*. And seeing it  
 is by *his own blood* that Christ enters into heaven  
 itself, to appear in the presence of God for his  
 people; the Apostle from thence infers that it  
 was necessary the earthly tabernacle, and all the  
 ancient patterns of heavenly things, should also  
 be purified with blood.<sup>2</sup>

It is further manifest that *sin-offerings in parti-*  
*cular* were typical of the offering which Christ  
 made of himself to God; and more eminently so than  
 many of the offerings that were made under  
 the law. For it was prophesied of Christ that  
 he should *make his soul an offering for sin*;<sup>3</sup> that is,  
*make himself a sin-offering*. Therefore the Apostle  
 speaking of Christ, saith that God *bath made him*  
*to be sin for us, who knew no sin*.<sup>4</sup> And it is  
 evident that Christ was *made sin* in no other sense  
 than by being made a *sin-offering*. The Apostle,  
 also, manifestly speaks of Christ as a *sin-offering*,  
 when

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 9. 8, 9, 11—14. <sup>2</sup> *verse* 23. <sup>3</sup> *Isaiab*, 53. 10.

<sup>4</sup> II. Cor. 5. 21.

when he says that he "needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once *when he offered up himself.*"<sup>1</sup> And he exhibits Christ under the like character, when he says that *he was once offered up to bear the sins of many.*<sup>2</sup>

THESE passages sufficiently prove that the *sin-offerings* which were under the levitical institution, were particularly and eminently typical of the offering which Christ made of his life to God; and consequently that there was a correspondence of the *substance* with the *shadow*—that the *reality* was answerable to the *image*: Otherwise the Apostle could not, with propriety, reason from the *latter* to the *former*.

BUT if there were an exhibition of *divine anger* in the sin-offerings, which were made under the law; we have reason to suppose there was also an exhibition of *divine anger* in the offering which *Christ made of himself for sin*. If those sacrifices, in which were contained the most lively image of divine displeasure against the sinner, were particularly and especially typical of the sacrifice of Christ; this would naturally lead us to conclude that the *sacrifice and sufferings of Christ* were a lively demonstration of the righteous displeasure of God against sinners.

## CHAPTER,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 7. 27.    <sup>2</sup> Heb. 9. 28.



## CHAPTER, IV.

*In which it is inquired whether there be not evidence that Christ died in the ROOM and STEAD of the sinner.*

IT is not necessary in the present case, to inquire what that death is which the sinner must have suffered, had it not been for the atonement and intercession of Christ: Or to compare the evils which must have come upon the sinner, with those which were actually induced by Christ. But the design is to examine the evidence which the holy scriptures give us that the Lord Jesus Christ did, in a strict and proper sense, die *in the room and stead of sinners*.

THIS inquiry is very necessary in order to understand the true import of Christ's death; the relation it had to the law which threatens death to the transgressor; and, the influence it hath in opening the way for mercy to be exercised toward the sinner. This will naturally lead to a better understanding of the language of so important an event, as it relates to the character and desert of the sinner; and enable us to see in what sense, and in what respects, the law of God is honoured by it.

THE language, the expressions, of the sacred writings are such as, in their most plain and natural import, convey the idea of Christ's being a *substitute*, and dying in the *room and stead* of the sinner. And, if the terms made use of, by the inspired writers, most naturally suggest this idea; this, of course, is the light in which the subject ought really to be viewed. In order to collect the sense  
of

of the sacred writers, more satisfactorily on the subject; it may be useful to give the several modes of expression which we find in the scriptures relative to it, a distinct and particular consideration. And,

I. OUR Saviour himself tells us that he “came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give *his life a RANSOM* for many.”<sup>1</sup> And the Apostle saith that Christ “gave *himself a RANSOM* for all, to be testified in due time.” These expressions naturally convey the idea of Christ’s life being given up *instead* of the sinner’s—that, when the sinner was condemned by law, to die; *Christ died in his room*. This is the literal meaning of the *original* terms, which are rendered, in our translation, *a ransom for many*. *Lutron anti polloon*, and *Antilutron uper pantoon*, are expressions which, in the Greek, naturally convey the idea of a *substitute*, and suppose *one* to be in the room and place of *another*. The word *lutron*, which is here translated *ransom*, properly signifies the *price of redemption*, or *that* on the gift of which, the guilty person is delivered from the punishment, or evils to which he was exposed. Thus, it was a law in Israel, “ye shall take no *satisfaction* for the life of a murderer—And, ye shall take no *satisfaction* for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the Priest.”<sup>2</sup> In both these places the *Hebrew word* which is here rendered *satisfaction*, is, in the Septuagint translation, *lutron*. When, therefore, Christ is said to have given *himself, his life a ransom for many*, (*lutron anti polloon*, or *antilutron*

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 20: 28. Mark, 10: 45. <sup>2</sup> Tim. 2: 6.  
<sup>3</sup> Numb. 35: 31, 32.

*lutron* *uper* *pantoon*,) it must mean that he gave up his life instead of those who were condemned to death.

And this is the same as if it had been said, he gave up his life instead of those who were condemned to die. The *preposition* which is here translated for many, or for all, must mean *opposition and contrariety*, or *commutation or the exchange* of one thing for another. But, it cannot be taken in the former sense; for then it would imply that Christ gave himself, his life, in *opposition* to the sinner, and in order to render it forever impossible that the sinner should live. It must therefore, be taken in the latter; and, then it will imply that Christ gave his life in the *room and stead* of the sinner. In this latter sense is the same *preposition* used by the *Seventy*, where the king said to the prophet, in the case which he had just put to him, "if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life."<sup>2</sup> So Jehu said, "If any of the men I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him."<sup>3</sup> When any one is said to give himself a ransom for another, it is supposed that he puts himself in the place of the other. Should any one give himself a ransom, (*antilutron*) to redeem a captive, it would suppose that he himself went into captivity. And should any one give himself, his life a ransom for one who was condemned to die; it would imply that he died for him, or in his stead.<sup>4</sup> The expressions under consideration manifestly imply that the life of Christ was the price of the sinner's; and that it was given up with this view, and for this purpose.

## I

## II.

<sup>2</sup> I. Kings, 20. 39. <sup>3</sup> II. Kings, 10. 24. <sup>4</sup> See Pool's Synop. and Dr. Whitby on the places.



II. THERE are other passages of Scripture in which it is not less clearly and fully intimated that Christ died *in the room and stead* of sinners.

IN this light is the case evidently represented by the Apostle, where he saith that “Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” Here we are expressly taught that Christ, a just person, suffered for those who are unjust, and who themselves deserved to suffer. And the sufferings of Christ which are here spoken of, are not his humiliation in being born and dwelling with men—not the temptations of Satan with which he was beset—not the slanders, the reproaches, the opposition of men, which he had to combat through the whole course of his life; but his death which he suffered upon the cross. For the Apostle, when he had spoken of Christ’s suffering for the unjust, in order that we might know what suffering he referred to, immediately adds “being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit.” So that the words of the Apostle most clearly contain this assertion, viz. That Christ suffered death for those who were condemned to die, that he might bring them to God. And how could it be more clearly and expressly asserted, without using the very terms themselves, that Christ died, or suffered death, in the room and stead of sinners? Accordingly it is elsewhere asserted that “Christ died for the ungodly—that while we were yet without strength, Christ died for us:—that he bore our sins in his own body on the tree—by whose stripes we are healed—that God hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin—that he was delivered (that is, to death) for our offences,

°I. Pet. 3. 18.    °Rom. 5. 6, 8. Pet. 2. 24.    °II. Cor. 5. 21.



“ fences, delivered up for us all;” and that, even  
 “ Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.”<sup>2</sup> These  
 passages import that the life of Christ was offered  
 up in sacrifice for the sins of men; and that it  
 was by the sacrifice of himself that he redeemed  
 sinners from destruction; this being their ransom,  
 or the price of their redemption. And all this is  
 perfectly correspondent with the prophecies which  
 went before concerning him: For Isaiah in the  
 spirit of prophecy, says, “ Surely he hath born  
 our griefs, and carried our sorrows—he was  
 wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised  
 for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace  
 was upon him—and the Lord laid on him the  
 iniquity of us all.”<sup>4</sup>

FURTHER; it is expressly asserted that Christ  
 became a curse for us. Paul saith that “ Christ  
 hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,  
 being made a curse for us.”<sup>5</sup> These words  
 imply that he was a substitute for us in suffering—  
 that he suffered evil in our stead. Be the evils  
 which were implied in the curse which Christ  
 suffered, what they may, still they were evils.  
 We cannot separate the idea of evil, from a  
 curse, especially the curse of God. From those  
 evils which are implied in the curse of the law to  
 sinners, Christ hath redeemed his people; and  
 from these he redeemed them by suffering those  
 evils, whatever they were, which were implied  
 in the curse which he endured. It is hence evident  
 that Christ, in his suffering on the cross, was a  
 substitute for the sinner. And however different  
 the evils which Christ suffered were, from those  
 which the sinner must have suffered had the curse

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 4. 25. and 8. 32. <sup>3</sup> I. Cor. 5. 7. <sup>4</sup> Isai. 53. 4,  
 5, 6. <sup>5</sup> Galat. 3. 13.

of the law fallen, in its full weight upon him; still whatever evils he did actually suffer, were endured in the room and stead of sinners. For it was by *becoming* or by *being made a curse*, that Christ redeemed his people.

In *whatever way* Christ's becoming, or being made, a *curse*, was essential to the recovery of sinners; or, whatever influence it actually hath in their recovery: We have, nevertheless, sufficient authority to conclude that it *has influence* in this great event, and *is essential* to it. For if Christ's *becoming a curse* has no influence, and were not essential to the sinner's being redeemed from the curse; we can see no reason why the Apostle should so particularly ascribe our redemption to *Christ's becoming a curse*. And, the passage which is quoted from the Old Testament in the proof of *Christ being made a curse*, shows that *this* was in his *dying on the cross*: "For," says the Apostle, "it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Hence it plainly appears that Christ *endured evil, suffered a curse, and died in the room and place* of sinners, in order to redeem them from the curse of the law. We can hardly conceive how any thing should be said which would more fully imply Christ's *suffering and dying* in the room of sinners. Christ's being made a *substitute* for sinners, and *dying in their stead*, can hardly be expressed in stronger, or more direct terms than these,—that, he *died for the ungodly*—*died for us*—*suffered the just for the unjust*,—*bore our sins in his own body on the tree*—*redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us*—*was made sin for us*,—*sacrificed for us* and the like.

SHOULD

SHOULD it be said that one person became a *surety* for another—that he was bound, imprisoned, made a victim for him; no one would be at any loss to determine the meaning of the expressions. All would immediately conceive that the surety was bound, imprisoned, made a victim, in the room and stead of the offender. This would be the construction which the common sense of mankind would universally put on such like expressions, in the case before us. For one person to become bound *for another*, or subject himself to any evil, or penalty, *for him*; is, in a strict and proper sense, to *substitute* himself, and put himself in *the room and place* of the delinquent. By a parity of reason, therefore, and by all just rules of construction, we must suppose that the variety of expressions made use of, in the holy scriptures, relative to the design and reason of the sufferings and death of Christ, do indeed imply that he *substituted himself* in the place of sinners, and *died in their room and stead*.

THAT Christ should *himself* become the price of the sinner's redemption—that he should give *himself, his life*, a ransom for sinners—that he should be *made sin, suffer, die, and be sanctified for them*; are expressions which convey a sense too plain and intelligible to be easily evaded. And, if these and such like expressions, do not imply that, for some reason or other, Christ verily *substituted himself, and subjected himself to suffering and death, in the room and place of sinners*; it will be difficult to find language, to invent terms, which would fully and unequivocally ascertain *this idea* of the end of his death.

It being then admitted that Christ did really  
die



die in the *room and stead* of sinners ; the following remarks naturally offer themselves, viz.

I. THAT, the death and sacrifice of Christ had an especial and peculiar relation to the *penal part* of the law of God. It is acknowledged that a humble spirit, and a broken heart, are frequently termed *sacrifices*, in the holy scriptures. And one principal reason of it, probably, is the correspondent views which were contained in such exercises, with the plain language, the natural import, of the sacrifices of atonement which were made for sin, under the law. The *broken spirit* which David considers as the acceptable sacrifice to God, implied an acknowledgement of the righteousness of the divine law, and a hope and trust in the mercy of God through an atonement. And, as this was but the obvious implication of the levitical sacrifices, the term itself, by a very easy and natural transition, might be carried to the *temper of mind* with which the literal sacrifices were to be made. But, literal sacrifices themselves are necessary only for sinners : they are instituted only in case of *guilt*, and where the law is broken. Had there been no sin, no sacrifice would have been required. The sacrifices under the law, in all cases wherein they were to be used, supposed that offences had been committed : And, only in cases of *offence* were sacrifices of atonement appointed. Where sin had not been committed, there was no need of, either confession of guilt in the creature, or testimony of displeasure in the Creator : But, where it had, both were necessary in order to reconciliation.

And

\* *Psalms*, 51. 17.



And, both these, we are to remember, were implied in the bloody sacrifices of the law; and equally so, in the sacrifice of Christ.

THE law of God, in the penal part of it, hath no demands on the *righteous*: but, sin brings us under obligation to punishment. The *preceptive part* of the law immediately and continually respects every creature; lying equally on every one, with all its binding force. But, not so as to the *penal*: this immediately respects only the transgressor; having a relation to him, and a demand on him, which it hath not on the innocent. And, as sacrifices of atonement are necessary only in cases of transgression, it is hence evident that they have a more immediate reference to the penalties, than to the preceptive parts of the divine law. As far, therefore, as there is a similitude, and unity of design, between the bloody sacrifices of the law, and the sacrifice of Christ; so far the latter, as well as the former, had a more immediate reference to the sanctions of the law. As far as the latter was prefigured by the former; so far the penal, rather than the preceptive parts of the law were regarded in it.

2. It appears from the preceding observations, that Christ was a *sacrifice* in his *bloody and ignominious death*, in a different sense from what he was in his *holy and obedient life*. However necessary it was that Christ should live a perfectly pure and holy life, in order to the acceptableness of the sacrifice which he made of himself in his death; (as this indeed was absolutely necessary) still, his *death* was a sacrifice in a different sense from that of his *obedient life*. Sin-offerings, under the former dispensation, were to be made only of clean beasts;

beasts; and those, too, such as were without blemish. Yet, these beasts, clean and unblemished, were to be offered up in sacrifice to God. So Christ, "through the eternal Spirit, offered up *himself without spot* to God."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, his people are said to be redeemed from their vain conversation *with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot.*<sup>2</sup> And, as the redemption which Christ hath obtained for his people is ascribed to his *blood*, or his *death*, as its procuring cause; we are naturally led to consider the sacrifice he made of himself as consisting in a peculiar and distinguishing manner in his *death*.

AGREEABLY to this view of the matter, Christ who knew no sin, is said to have been *made sin* for us;<sup>3</sup> which can be true in no other sense than being made a *sin-offering*. And that it was not in his obedient life, but his ignominious death that Christ was made a sin-offering, seems naturally to be suggested by the distinction which the Apostle makes between his first and second appearing. He says, "As it is appointed unto man once to die—so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time *without sin* unto salvation."<sup>4</sup>

We know not in what respects Christ will appear the second time, without sin, any more than he did the first; excepting it be that at his second coming he will not make his *soul*, or his *life*, an *offering for sin*. And it is exceedingly plain that *sufferings* and *death* have a more direct  
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<sup>1</sup> Heb. 9. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Pet. 1. 19.

<sup>3</sup> II. Cor. 5. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. 9. 27, 28.

and immediate relation to the sanctions of the law, than *obedience*.

3. It may be remarked further that the same character, the same disposition of the Deity, which would have appeared in the death of the sinner, was designed to be exhibited in *the death of Christ*. It has been before observed that it is essential to the glory of God, that the spirit of the law be perfectly adhered to, and fully maintained, in his administration of government. Hence, and hence only, arose the necessity of the *sinner's* death. Had not the former been necessary, neither would the latter. Had it not been necessary that the same character should appear, and be fully and perfectly preserved, in *governing*, as was naturally exhibited by the laws which were originally established as the *rules* of divine government: we could discern no necessity of even the *sinner's* death. But seeing there is an obvious necessity of this, we easily see why it must be that the soul, that sins should, also, die. If, therefore, the *Saviour* died in the *room and stead* of the sinner, we can't rationally suppose otherwise than that, in this remarkable event, the same divine disposition was delineated, and the same character exhibited, which would have appeared in the death of the sinner. Consequently,

4. THE principal design of the *death of Christ* was not to discover the perfection and strength of his own personal obedience; and to bestow on it a lustre, with which it could not otherwise have shone. It is confessed that this is an end not only worthy of being an object, but which also was very advantageously answered by the death of Christ. Still it is evident that this was not the  
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only,

only, or even principal object in view, in this great event. For Christ to *die* in order to discover the immoveable strength of his disposition to *obey* God; and to *die in the room and stead* of those who must otherwise have fallen victims to divine wrath; are not precisely one and the same thing: Nor do they exhibit the character of the great Governor of the world exactly in the same point of light. The death of the sinner is a glass in which we see the righteousness, the punitive justice of God: So, also, is the death of Christ. In the former, we have a view of righteousness as it relates to the execution of punishment: So, also in the latter; if it be true that Christ died in the room and stead of sinners; and, that his death had a more direct and immediate relation to the *sanction* of the moral law.

THE death of Christ discovered his own *righteousness*, not merely as it relates to protecting the innocent; but, also, to punishing the guilty: not only as it respects rewarding the virtuous; but, bringing evil on the wicked. Otherwise we cannot see how it could be said with propriety, that he was *made sin*, or a *sin-offering*, for us. *Righteousness* is a general term, which relates to law and government. It equally regards the sanctions, as the precepts of the law; and, as really respects the execution of punishments, as the bestowment of rewards. Christ's becoming a curse for us, and his dying in our room and stead, as truly imply that he *suffered* for us, as any thing said in the holy-scriptures supposeth that he *obeyed* the law for us. And, when he is called *the Lord our righteousness*, the term is to be taken in a large and general sense, as relating, both to the precepts and the sanctions, of the divine law: And, is to be



be considered as regarding *government* as it is supported, both by the execution of punishments, and the bestowment of rewards. So, also, when the righteousness of the law is spoken of as being fulfilled in christians,<sup>1</sup> the term is to be taken in a general sense; and, is to be considered as having respect to *law in general*, as well the penal, as the perceptive parts of it: Otherwise we could not see how the honour and dignity of the divine government could be preserved, and yet the guilty go unpunished.

## CHAPTER V.

*Shewing the necessity of Christ's perfect obedience in order to his making atonement for sin; and, the influence which his personal righteousness hath in procuring pardon for the sinner.*

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the evidence there is that Christ died in the room and stead of sinners; and that the crimes of men are expiated by the sufferings of Christ; it is to be remembered that there is no merit, no moral worth or atoning virtue, *merely in sufferings*. Pain and distress have no moral virtue in them: and are of no importance, otherwise than as *means* through which the beauty of the divine character, and the true disposition of the divine mind, may be seen by his creatures. For, as all the divine administration is fitted to exhibit the character of God; if punishments did not answer this end, they would never be made use of in the divine government. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the *sufferings of the sinner*, in no other way than as they serve to exhibit the righteous character of God, and prove him to be a hater of iniquity.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 8. 4.

quity. Were not this the case, the moral character of the man Jesus Christ would not have been of so great importance to his being made an offering for sin: But, his whole worth as a *sacrifice* must be estimated by his capacity to endure pain.

THE worth of the sacrifice which Christ made of himself for the sins of the world, arises from the moral excellencies of his person and character. Were not this the case, the same quantity of sufferings endured by a person of inferior character, would have equally answered the end of obtaining pardon for the sinner. It is true, indeed, that for a person of *Christ's* dignity and worth to endure *greater degrees* of pain, is of more importance than enduring *less*; yet, the value, the import, in a moral view, of his sufferings, be they either greater or less, arises from his personal worth and character.

THIS being the case, it was absolutely necessary, in order to the atonement he was about to make by once offering up himself to God, that his life and character should be most perfectly pure and spotless: Otherwise, in his death he could not have been an offering of a sweet favour to God. This, we are naturally led to suppose, was a reason why the sin-offerings that were made under the former dispensation, were expressly required to be of the clean beasts; and no other would be accepted. For God expressly declares, “curst be the deceiver which hath in his flock  
“ a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the  
“ Lord a corrupt thing.”<sup>1</sup> God's acceptance of an offering, and his being reconciled to the offender,

<sup>1</sup> *Malachi*, 1. 14.

offender, were upon the express condition that the sacrifice was made only of beasts that were clean. And the design of this law was, not only to teach the duty and obligation of devoting our best services, and giving up the best we have to God; but more clearly and perfectly to prefigure that glorious sacrifice which Christ made of *himself* to God for the sins of the world. Hence the Apostle saith, “ For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.”<sup>2</sup> The dignity and excellency of the character of Christ, and these only, put the infinite value on the sacrifice which he made of himself for the sins of the world. And on this account, and this alone, it was that God was pleased to smell a sweet favour in the offering. Had there been the least blemish or imperfection in the character of Christ, his blood would be as far from cleansing from sin, as that of bulls and goats: And his sufferings, however great in kind, or degree, would have been of no avail to obtain pardon for the smallest transgression,

An angry tyrant may have his rage appeased by sufferings—his revenge glutted by blood. But not so with the infinitely pure and glorious governor of the world, who hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. An exhibition of the glories of his character, the infinite strength and purity of his love, is the great end in view, in all the pain and misery he brings on his creatures. The *sufferings* of Christ, therefore, aside from the moral excellencies of his character, his most perfect and virtuous obedience under them, could

† Heb. 7. 26.

could not have been of the least worth in the sight of God: Because neither the wisdom, nor righteousness of God in his regards to the general good, could have been seen in the Father's laying on him the iniquities of us all.

BUT the necessity of the *obedience* of Christ, in order to his making atonement for sin, is further evident from such considerations as these, viz.

I. THE perfect obedience of Christ was a necessary and glorious attestation to the righteousness and equity of the moral law.

MERCY to the sinner necessarily implies that the law by which he is condemned is just and righteous. And without a full and perfect acknowledgment of this, Christ could neither consistently intercede for mercy to transgressors, nor the Father bestow it. Until this point was fully acknowledged and established, there could be no room for reconciliation: because every exercise of mercy without this, would be an implicit confession of undue severity in the law. Therefore Christ himself saith, that "heaven and earth shall pass, before one jot, or one tittle shall pass from the law, until all shall be fulfilled." But to behold a person of such high dignity as the Lord Jesus Christ, and of so transcendently excellent a character, perfectly obeying the divine law; and exhibiting in himself, and that under the most-trying scenes, a most perfect pattern of that cheerful obedience and unreserved submission which is required of men; affords a strong testimony to the righteousness of that law under which men were originally placed: And is fitted to convince us that every breach of it deserves

<sup>1</sup> *Matt.* 5. 18.



erves the curse. No pattern, no example, could possibly carry stronger evidence of this than the holy and obedient life of Christ.

SUCH a testimony to the righteousness of the law, was but a proper and necessary acknowledgment to be made to God, by him who undertook to mediate peace between God and men. Without this it could not have appeared that Christ *in every thing* justified God, and *wholly* condemned the sinner. And, had not the man Jesus Christ most perfectly justified God, and condemned the sinner, his offering up himself upon the cross, instead of being a sweet incense, would only have been falling a victim to the just indignation of his injured sovereign.

BUT, when Christ, being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death; when his death was an expression of the high sense he entertained of the excellency and righteousness of the moral law; the sacrifice he made of himself was then an offering of a sweet favour unto God; and, naturally prepared the way for a treaty of peace and reconciliation between God and men. And, the perfect obedience of Christ under all the sufferings he endured on earth, especially in the last and extreme scenes of his life, was peculiarly honourable and acceptable to God, as it carried the fullest acknowledgment of the righteousness of divine government when administered in the actual execution of divine vengeance on his enemies.

WHEN we take a view of the nature, design and greatness of the sufferings of Christ, it will appear that his voluntarily subjecting himself to them, and his ready, cheerful and patient obedience

ence under them, were what really constituted the whole moral worth of the sacrifice which he made of himself for the sins of the world. The *bare distress and pain* of the Saviour, in themselves simply considered, had no virtue in them, and were of no worth. But, the disposition of mind with which he endured those extreme agonies and pains, the temper he expressed under them, were of infinite worth. These were, therefore, precious in the sight of God, and worthy to be acknowledged by Christ's being raised to that high station of honour and glory to which he is now exalted. Therefore, Christ's present exaltation and reign are spoken of by the Apostle, as the reward of his voluntary humiliation and obedience unto death. Treating on this subject he says of Christ, "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. *Wherefore* God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."<sup>1</sup> Christ's real merit of the high station he now possesseth, consisted, not in the extremity of his sufferings, but the perfection of his obedience. It is not, strictly speaking, for the pains he endured, but for the views and temper of mind he manifested under them, that the man Jesus Christ is raised to universal dominion, and has angels, men, and devils subjected to his authority.

2. THAT God should be manifest in flesh, and voluntarily

<sup>1</sup> *Philip.* 2, 9, 10, 11.

voluntarily lay down his life for his people and become a curse for them, not only strongly attests the righteousness of the divine law as a rule of government; but, abundantly proves that the disposition of the divine mind most invariably conforms to the *rules* of equity and righteousness. That this should be done, was a matter of infinite importance to the honourable exercise of mercy. It is far from being enough that the *rules* of divine government should be such as approve themselves to the consciences of men, and carry conviction of their equity: But, seeing that God will forever maintain the dignity and honour of his own character; when he was about to do so wonderful a thing as to pardon and save sinners, it was a matter of the last importance that he should exhibit a character, a disposition of mind, perfectly conformable to the true spirit of those rules of government which he had previously established. Otherwise, though the *law* might appear just, *God himself* could not appear so in justifying the ungodly.

BUT, the scene of the sufferings of the Son of God abundantly displayed *this character* of Jehovah, *this disposition* of the divine mind; which it could not have done in such a manner as to lay a foundation for mercy to sinners, had not the character, the obedience of the Mediator, been absolutely spotless and perfect.

HOWEVER voluntary Christ was in *laying down his life*, the hand and agency of the Father are nevertheless, by no means to be overlooked in this remarkable event. Though the *Son made his soul an offering for sin*, the *Father* bruised him, put him to grief, and laid on him the iniquity of

us all; the hand and the agency of God were as truly conspicuous, and his providence as active, in bringing suffering, distress and death on the Son of his love; as in any evil he doth, or ever will bring on sinners. Christ suffered as much by the decree, the determinate counsel of God, as impenitent sinners will do hereafter. And in this active providence, in that astonishing event, God acted for his own glory, and designedly exhibited his own infinitely excellent character, as really as in the final perdition of impenitent sinners. Yea, and he evidently designed that the same righteous regard to his holy law, to good order and government, should appear and shine in the former event as in the latter.

The case being thus, it is easy to see that, unless the moral character of Christ had been absolutely perfect, *that exhibition* of divine righteousness, which was made in his sufferings and death, could afford no more reason for mercy to sinners, than *that* which is made in the destruction of sinners themselves. For a manifestation of righteousness in bringing evil upon one whose moral character is not perfect, is so far from exhibiting a reason why the wicked should go unpunished, that it rather forceth the necessity of their punishment. Therefore, that the sufferings of Christ might be such a manifestation of divine righteousness as would open the way for God to appear just in justifying the ungodly, it was of absolute importance that he himself should be without sin, and that guile should not be found in his mouth. Then his taking the curse upon himself, and the Father's laying it on him, will be so bright a display of divine righteousness, as to render God's regard



regard to law, to good order and government, gloriously conspicuous in the exercise of mercy to such as penitently fly for refuge to the Saviour of the world.

If it be admitted that God's regard particularly to the penal part of his law was designedly manifested in the sufferings and death of Christ; it is easy to see that this regard to the law would become conspicuous in proportion to the dignity and excellency of him who suffered. For, as on the one hand, we estimate the benevolence that is expressed in the bestowment of good, partly by the meanness and unworthiness of the subject on whom it is conferred; so, on the other, the degree of displeasure which is expressed in bringing evil, is estimated greatly by the dignity and excellency of the person on whom it falls. The same measure of natural evil, the same quantity of pain is expressive of very different degrees of displeasure, according to the difference of character and dignity in the person on whom it is inflicted. For a King to imprison his *Son* for a crime, awes his subjects more than the execution of a common felon, and may do more to establish his authority, and gain respect to his government. The reason is, that his regards to the rights of his government are more strongly painted in the former case, than in the latter. So for God to inflict pain upon a mere man, would naturally express displeasure to spectators: But in the same degree of natural evil brought on *him who is his fellow*, his anger would glow in brighter and more awful colours, and strike the spectators with a reverence and fear which the other instance could not beget.

THEREFORE,

THEREFORE, the absolute perfection, as well as dignity of the moral character of Christ, when he was about to offer up his life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world ; were of the utmost importance to the acceptableness of his offering, and the manifestation it was necessary should be made of God's righteous displeasure against those for whom he died. For without this absolute perfection, and high dignity, of the character of the Saviour, his death on the cross would not have been a glass in which the divine purity could have been discovered with sufficient clearness, while he exercised mercy toward sinners.

3. THE perfect obedience of Christ, and that even unto death, and the spotless purity of his moral character, were absolutely necessary to prepare him for *interceding* with the Father for sinners.

THE dignity and excellency of the intercessor's character, add weight, and give importance to his intercession. It is more honourable to a Prince to pardon, upon the intercession of some illustrious person, than on that of one of his menial servants. And when the penalty for the remission of which intercession is made, is perfectly deserved ; and the honour of the sovereign is concerned in testifying against it ; it is necessary that the intercession itself should carry in it the fullest acknowledgments, both of the righteousness of the judge, and the justice of the punishment. For without this the intercession itself might justly be interpreted as a reflection on the Sovereign, and a vindication of the criminal. This being the case the intercessor naturally, in some sense, puts on the character and takes the place of him who is condemned.

BUT

BUT when we consider the glorious and infinite majesty of God, on one hand; and the extreme guilt and inexpressible vileness of the sinner, on the other; we can't but see the absolute importance of the fullest acknowledgments, both of God's righteousness, and the sinner's guilt, in him who steps in as a mediator between them; however dignified he be in his own personal character. None but a person of the most exalted character would be equal to the weight of such a mediation. And one who suitably estimated the infinitely different characters, qualities and stations of the beings, between whom he was to mediate a peace, would never presume to appear before the great God without the fullest testimonials of a high and perfect sense of the divine righteousness on one hand, and the extreme guilt and wickedness of the sinner, on the other. But how could these testimonials be so well obtained, and where could such views in the Saviour, both of God's righteousness, and the sinner's guilt, be so strongly painted, as in his obedience unto death, and that even the death of the cross? in this view of the matter, nothing like the death of Christ, could pave the way for him to the Father: And nothing like *his own blood* could give weight to his intercession.

FOR so illustrious a person as the infinite Redeemer, to exemplify his regards to the honour of God and his law, by a most perfect obedience under the most unparalleled sufferings, even unto death, and his sense of the sinner's ill desert, by appearing before the eternal God *in his own blood*; must wonderfully qualify him for so important a mediation; and above every thing, give weight to his intercession. It is no wonder that God  
does



does not reject an intercession which does such honor to his law and government, and makes his character appear so glorious in the exercises of mercy to sinners.

Thus we see how a person of Christ's most excellent character prepared himself for acting the part of an intercessor for sinners; and the trying scenes he voluntarily went through, to qualify himself for so weighty and important an office. And all this was necessary to render himself acceptable in the eyes of the Father, in character of mediator; and to gain an audience, in a cause of such a nature as that which he had undertaken.

## CHAPTER, VI.

*Showing the ends which are answered by the SUFFERINGS of Christ; and what is the language and import of them.*

AS none of the providences of God are without their instruction; evils and calamities have a language, an import, as well as other dispensations. And if there be a language in the sufferings which are brought on moral beings, greater degrees of distress and pain are more significant than smaller ones; and expressive of higher emotions in him who inflicts them. Although, therefore, it be admitted that the end and import of the sufferings of Christ cannot be collected merely from their *greatness*: *this*, however, is a consideration which may not be without its use, in investigating a subject of so much importance. Greatness of sufferings gives a colouring to things, which is not found in smaller degrees



degrees of distress: and naturally raises and heightens the ideas, both with respect to the avenger, and the patient.

WERE the sufferings of Christ no more, nor greater, than would naturally and necessarily affect human, animal nature, in that trying situation in which he was placed, and in which he expired; they would still have a language, an import in them. But were there superadded to these, *peculiar* agonies and distresses, this most surprising event immediately puts on a different hue and the language of it is written in deeper colours.

IN order to a clearer understanding of the design and import of the sufferings of Christ, it may be of use to attend particularly to the descriptions given of them, by the sacred writers, and the manner in which they are represented; that we may, from thence, be enabled to form some estimate of their weight and greatness.

THE whole life of Christ, especially his public ministry, was a scene of labour and suffering: But at the close of it his sufferings became much more severe and intense. Accordingly, in regard of *sufferings*, this is spoken of with an emphasis, both by Christ and his Apostles. Thus when the Jews laid violent hands on the Saviour, he says, “When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands *against me*: but *this is your hour, and the power of darkness*;<sup>1</sup> hereby intimating that now he was in a peculiar manner given up into the hands of the powers of darkness. For this reason it manifestly was that the prospect of what he had to endure when he was to make his soul an offering for sin, was so

extremely

<sup>1</sup> Luke, 22. 53.

extremely trying and affecting to him. This last trying and affecting scene appeared to lie with great and peculiar weight on the Saviour's mind: And he ever spoke of it with peculiar feelings and emotion. When he told his disciples that he came to set fire on the earth, he immediately adds, "but I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, when he went into the garden where he was taken by his enemies, though just before he possessed the utmost composure, he was immediately seized with horror, and said to his disciples, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." And this sorrow broke forth into this earnest, pathetic cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But that it might not be thought that his spirit failed him, and that his soul shrunk back from the sufferings it was necessary he should endure, he immediately adds, "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."<sup>2</sup> This scene is prophetically described, by the Psalmist, in the following manner, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul."<sup>3</sup> One Evangelist relates that, upon his coming into the garden, "he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy."<sup>4</sup> And, another, that upon his earnest cry for deliverance if it might be the will of God, an Angel was sent to him from heaven, to support and strengthen him under his distresses: And, that he was in agony in his prayer, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to

<sup>1</sup> Luke, 12. 50.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. 26. 38, 39, 41.    <sup>3</sup> Ps. 116. 3, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Mark, 14. 33.

to the ground.<sup>1</sup> Soon upon this, his enemies came upon him, being conducted to the place of his retirement by one of his professed friends, and took him by violence, and carried him before the rulers, where he suffered the grossest indignity and abuse. Here he was treated with the utmost derision and contempt; mocked, spit upon, and cruelly smitten. Finally, after sentence of death had been passed upon him, he was led out of the city, and, like the vilest malefactors, nailed to the cross. There after he had hung a number of hours on the accursed tree, and endured the sore revilings and cruel taunts of his enemies; as if given up of God himself, in whom he had ever trusted, he pathetically cries out, “my God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me?”<sup>2</sup> Upon this, nature itself sinking under so dreadful a weight, the mighty Redeemer bowed his sorrowful head, and gave up the ghost. The affecting description given us by the Psalmist, of these unparalelled sufferings, may assist us in judging of their nature, and estimating their greatness. After this manner they are prophetically described; “my God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me? why art *thou* so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the day time, *but thou hearest not*; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee, *they trusted*, and thou didst deliver *them*. *They* cried unto thee, and *were delivered*: *they* trusted in thee, and *were not confounded*. But *I* am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men and despised of the people. All they that see me, laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake

M

shake

<sup>1</sup> Luke, 22. 43, 44.    <sup>2</sup> Mat. 27, 46.



“ shake the head, saying, he trusted on the Lord  
 “ that he would deliver him: *let him deliver him,*  
 “ *seeing he delighted in him*——I am poured out  
 “ like water, and all my bones are out of joint:  
 “ *My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of*  
 “ *my bowels.* My strength is dried up like a pot-  
 “ sherd: my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and  
 “ thou hast brought me into the dust of death.”<sup>1</sup>

ON this description of the sufferings of Christ, we remark.

1. THAT it naturally represents his misery as being exceedingly great. Language can hardly paint a scene more full of horror and distress; or represent more keen and pungent anguish. No account is given us, in any part of the sacred writings, of sufferings to be compared with those of the Lord of glory. Admitting the description to be just, and without a figure; we must necessarily suppose that pain and sorrow arose to such a height, in the man Jesus Christ, as is beyond the power of a mere human mind to receive.

2. THE above description evidently represents the sufferings of Christ as being *peculiarly* great, and attended with some *singular* circumstances which gave an edge to his sorrow. The amazement which took hold on him before the arrival of his enemies, the agony into which he fell while in the garden, and his repeated and fervent importunities that the cup he was about to drink might *if possible*, pass from him; are, all, indications of evils in prospect, far greater than those of a mere separation of soul and body. But just before, he appeared with great calmness and composure, instituting the sacrament of the supper, and communing with his disciples in it.

But,



But, in a few moments, without any visible cause from any difference of external circumstances, he discovers great perturbation of spirit; and, was in such agony of mind as was too much for nature to bear. This must, certainly, have arisen from some invisible cause; nor can it be accounted for any otherwise than by supposing that it arose from the immediate hand of God. These circumstances would naturally suggest to the disciples, that there was something far more trying to the mighty Saviour, in that scene of sufferings that was before him, than either the mere indignity he suffered from men, or the pangs of natural death. The pains of death were, soon after, suffered by his disciples, without any such complaint: And, the prospect of suffering death for the sake of Christ, and in his cause, was so far from being terrifying and distressing, that it was rather joyful and comforting to them. Accordingly, when the Lord sent *Ananias* to Saul, afterwards called Paul, to perform a miraculous cure upon him; he tells him, that this Saul was a chosen vessel unto the Lord, to bear his name among the gentiles; and says, "I will shew him how great things he must *suffer* for my name's sake." The strong crying and tears, therefore, of the Saviour, and the mighty agonies into which he fell before his death; together with his most affecting exclamation on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" when compared with the patience, serenity and fortitude with which his disciples afterward suffered death for his sake; must strongly indicate distress and pains peculiar to *Him who made his soul an offering for sin*. Be the occasion, or especial reason of these sufferings what it may, it is nevertheless

nevertheless manifest that there was something very peculiar in the sufferings themselves; and that they had an unparralelled sharpness in them. What can be more dishonourable to the character and dignity of Christ, especially as he is held forth as the most perfect pattern of meekness, and patience under sufferings; than to suppose his distress and anguish did not rise to an height far exceeding any thing that was ever endured by a mere man? We have no other way to reconcile his bitter cries and complaints, with that patience, that quiet resignation for which he is so much celebrated in the word of God; than by magnifying his sufferings, and heightening our ideas of their weight and greatness.

3. It is, therefore, natural to suppose that the principal pains endured by the Lord of glory, in that hour of darkness, were seated particularly *in his mind*—that *the views of mind* which then possessed him, were far more distressing than the pains of mere animal, sensitive nature. If that forsaking him of God which occasioned his bitter exclamation on the cross, was merely his being given up into the power of wicked men, to be put to death; we can still see nothing more dreadful in it, than merely his suffering the pains of dying. We have, therefore, reason to suppose that such *views* of things, such a *sense* of the awful and terrible nature of divine wrath, then crowded in upon him, and filled his pure and holy mind, as quite overwhelmed him with sorrow; and, were far more insupportable than the pangs of natural death. Thus, might he be said eminently to be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. All the concomitant circumstances of his

his death, especially when compared with the behaviour of his followers under the sufferings they endured for his sake, very naturally concur to suggest these apprehensions concerning the sufferings of Christ.

HAVING thus taken a view of the *sufferings themselves* which our Lord underwent; in order to understand *the language and import* of them, we may, in the first place, consider the hand and agency of God in them; and then, the evidence we have of their being expressions of divine anger.

I. WE may consider the hand and agency of God, in the sufferings of Christ. Though Christ was *God* as well as *man*, and it was indeed GOD that was manifest in flesh; yet so long as he was in the world he acted in a subordinate capacity, put on the form of a servant, and subjected himself to the will and government of his Father who was in heaven. Christ in his whole person, however dignified by being peculiarly and eminently the Son of God, was a servant and became obedient. And every event and circumstance of his life are to be attributed to the providential government and disposal of him who is only God, as their cause, as truly and in as high a sense as the events and circumstances of the lives of mere men.

On this ground we observe,

I. THAT GOD brought on the man Jesus Christ, all the evils and sufferings which he endured. *His* hand and agency were not less visible, nor his power and providence less active, in bringing sufferings and death on his *only begotten Son*, than on sinners of mankind. Nor indeed was the governing providence of God less concurrent and  
active,



active, in bringing pain and distress on the man Jesus Christ, than it is in bringing evils on impenitent sinners, either in this world or the world to come. The flame which consumed the life of the Saviour, was as truly lighted up by the power of God; as that which will torment his enemies, day and night, forever and ever. This is manifest, as well from the language in which this event is spoken of in the word of God; as from the nature and reason of things. Thus it is said, JEHOVAH *laid on him the iniquities of us all*: And *it pleased JEHOVAH to bruise him and put him to grief.*<sup>1</sup> God also saith, by the prophet, relative to this event, "Awake, O sword, against  
 " my Shepherd, and against the man that is my  
 " fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: *smite the*  
 " *shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.*"<sup>2</sup> Therefore the Apostle Peter acknowledgeth the death of Christ to be the effect of *the hand and determinate counsel of God*: And that though men crucified him with *wicked hands*, they nevertheless did no more than what *the hand and council of God, determined to be done.*<sup>3</sup>

It would be very inconsistent, both with reason, and the plain and natural import of these scripture-expressions, to suppose that he who is only God, the original and supreme Governor of the world, suspended even in the least degree, that agency which had hitherto been unremitted and universal: steep aside, and stood as a mere spectator of this horrid scene. If this were the case, how it could before, with propriety, be predicted, that *God should smite, and bruise, and put him to grief,* and afterward be acknowledged that his sufferings and death were the effects of

<sup>1</sup> *Isai.* 53. 6, 10.    <sup>2</sup> *Zachari.* 13. 7.    <sup>3</sup> *Acts,* 4. 28.



*the hand and determinate counsel of God*; is not easy to be comprehended. Were it so, that the hand and power of God were less active in bringing those evils on Christ, than in any other evils brought on moral beings: it is not easy to see why Christ, who, in character of mediator, always considered himself as a servant, and acknowledged subjection to God, should yet cry to Him for help and deliverance. It is evident, therefore, that whatever evils were endured by Christ, were from the hand of *that God* between whom and men he acted as mediator: All the sufferings he endured, were from *his* active power and providence; they were as much from the hand of God, as any evils that were ever brought on any of the human race.

2. ALL the conduct of God, in his providential government over his creatures, is expressive, and hath a language in it. None of the *providences* of God are without meaning; but are all instructive and significant. They exhibit the same uniform and glorious character that is held up in his word. The same purposes and designs, the same most perfect and excellent disposition, which are expressed *in words*, in the holy scriptures, are delineated and exemplified *in facts*, in his providential government. The divine character is described *in words*, in the sacred oracles; and exhibited *in facts* in his *providence and works*. And the character itself is not less legible, nor its excellencies less visible or conspicuous, in the latter than in the former. The real character, the general disposition of the divine mind, is not less obvious in what he *does*, than in what he *says*: Nor could it easily be accounted for that it should be otherwise, while one great end of his *word* is,

to explain the reasons of his conduct—the rule of his providential government. And as the glory of God really appears in the perfect correspondence of his actual government, with those laws of his kingdom which are taught us in his word; so, every part of the divine conduct toward intelligent creatures, expresseth the same general character which is marked out in the promises and threatenings of revelation.

3. THIS being the case, it is manifest that there is no part of the divine conduct toward moral creatures, but what is expressive, either of his *approbation of righteousness*, or *hatred of iniquity*. It is the glory of God that he loves righteousness, and hates iniquity. This is absolutely essential to his goodness and love. Without this, his disposition to promote the general and the greatest good, could not possibly be perfect. And if such a disposition as this wholly possesses and fills the divine mind, there can be no part of the divine conduct but what is expressive of it. It must be that, in all the good, and the evil, which he brings on the subjects of his moral government, he invariably exhibits this most pure and perfect goodness: adjusting all his providential dispensations in such a manner, and in such perfect wisdom, as naturally to carry the marks of it; and sensibly to express, to rational beings, either his approbation of virtue, or his hatred of vice.

THIS brings us to show, in the next place,

II. THAT the sufferings and death of Christ were expressions of divine anger.

THERE

THERE is nothing in the word of God to lead us to suppose that evils brought on moral beings are not, in every instance, expressive of divine anger; but a variety of things that evidently prove the contrary. For,

I. THE law and the promise of God, secure the innocent from every positive evil, every infelicity which doth not necessarily result from the mere natural imperfection of the creature. The word of God is full of promises to the righteous; and there is no mention any where made of evil, but in case of transgression. God *blessed* our first parents in their estate of innocency; and gave not the least intimation of any evil that should befall them, unless they rebelled against him. Such was the nature of the covenant, the tenour of the law, under which they were placed, that it absolutely secured them from every positive evil; and particularly from so great an evil as *natural death*, in case they persisted in their obedience. Therefore the Apostle considers temporal death as a certain proof that the subject of it is a sinner. He says, "Wherefore as by one man *sin* entered into the world; and *death* by *sin*; and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." <sup>1</sup> As *sin* brought death into the world; so *this* still gives it universal dominion. As it was originally a testimony of divine anger, it still continues to be so. That death is a curse is evident from this, if nothing else, that the *death* of *Christ* is brought, by the inspired Apostle, as a proof that *he became a curse*. <sup>2</sup>

BUT it is evident that the law of God secures the innocent, not only from *death*, but from

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every

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 5. 12. <sup>2</sup> See Galat. 3. 13.

every other positive evil. The Apostle saith, "Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt,"<sup>3</sup> Where the obedience is perfect, the reward is due by law; the *law*, under which man was originally placed, secures it; and it is not considered as an act of *grace* to confer it. And if the reward here spoken of implies a deliverance from all positive evils, and a security against them; if it intends a happiness as complete as the *natural imperfection* of the creature will admit; then, of course, the law, the established rule of divine government, certainly secures the innocent from every such evil; and ascertains to him all possible good. But if the divine law thus protects the innocent, and secures him against evil, then all positive evils brought on moral beings, must certainly proclaim divine anger, and prove that some iniquity hath taken place.

If the law of God doth not certainly secure the innocent from all evils; if there are evils to which such may be exposed and subjected, which, nevertheless, are not the objects of a *curse*, and *that* too the curse of God's law; there is no security that they who are *redeemed by Christ* shall ever be delivered from all evil; because *his redemption* is effectual to deliver only from the curse of the law. Christ hath redeemed his people from *the curse of the law*; but from no other evils than such as they are doomed to by *this curse*. If, therefore, the *law* doth not secure the *innocent* from evil and sufferings, neither doth the *gospel*, the *believer*. And, of course, if natural evils and sufferings are not invariable testimonies of divine displeasure; we neither should have had

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 4. 4.



had any security against them, *had we remained innocent*; nor can we now obtain any security against them *by being interested in the redemption purchased by Christ*. Yet we find it expressly declared, concerning those who are redeemed by Christ, that “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more *death*, neither *sorrow*, nor *crying*, neither shall there be any more *pain*: for the former things are passed away.”<sup>1</sup> Accordingly,

2. POSITIVE evils, we find, are invariably the subjects of a *threatning*: with these God *threatens* his enemies. There is no evil to which human nature is subjected in the present world, or to which men are exposed in the future, but what is comprised in some one of the *threatnings* of the word of God. Therefore, though peace and happiness are promised to the righteous, the Lord proclaims, “Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him.”<sup>2</sup> And, it is of great importance that we view the subject in this light, in order that we may be convinced, that the evils we suffer in this life, are indeed so many testimonies of God’s righteous displeasure against us. God never *threatens* evils excepting in the cases of offence; and, never *brings* evils in the execution of the great and original laws of his kingdom but on those who transgress. And, if this be true, it manifestly proves that all *positive evils* are *certain expressions* of divine anger. But,

3. THE holy Scriptures clearly and very evidently teach us that the sufferings and death of Christ were expressions of divine anger. By the Prophet Zechariah, God calls upon his sword

to

<sup>1</sup> Rev. 21. 4.    <sup>2</sup> Isai. 3. 11.

to awake against Christ, and commissions it to take away his life in the following words, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: *smite* the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered—." <sup>1</sup> That Christ is the shepherd here spoken of, is evident from this, that he was many times prophesied of under that title; and frequently stiled himself *the shepherd*, *the true shepherd*, while he was upon earth; and had that title often given him, by the Apostles, after his ascension. And, that the words under consideration had reference to the death of Christ, and were an express prediction of it, is manifest from the application which he, himself, makes of them, on the night on which he was betrayed. When Christ went out to the mount of Olives, after the institution of the sacramental supper, he says to his disciples "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: *for it is written*, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered:" <sup>2</sup> And this we find no where written but in the passage before us. Here, then, God calls upon his own sword to awake against Christ, and to smite him. And, this is evidently the language, the expression, of righteous indignation. God's *sword* is that by which he executes vengeance: As the *jus gladii* among the Romans, the *sword* of the civil magistrate, means his authority to execute punishments. Therefore the Psalmist saith; "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, (that is, if the wicked turn not,) he (God,) will whet his *sword*; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him

<sup>1</sup> Zechar. 13. 7.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. 26. 31.

“ him the instrument of death: he ordaineth his  
 “ arrows against the persecutors.”<sup>1</sup> And the Apostle  
 urgeth the fear of the civil magistrate on this  
 consideration that he “ beareth not the *sword* in  
 “ vain, but is the minister of God, a revenger to  
 “ execute wrath upon him that doth evil.”<sup>2</sup>  
 Hence it is evident that God’s *sword* is used in the  
 execution of vengeance: Nor, is it ever made  
 use of in any other way. *The sword* he made use  
 of, when he smote Christ, was more especially,  
 the cruel and perfidious Jews. Accordingly, we  
 find that David stiles wicked men *God’s sword*.  
 Thus he prays, “ Arise, O Lord, disappoint him,  
 “ cast him down; deliver my soul from the *wick-*  
 “ *ed* which is *thy sword*.”<sup>3</sup> And this prayer, we  
 have reason to suppose, David made in the Spirit,  
 personating Christ, of whom he was an eminent  
 type. And, the prayer itself is the same, for  
 substance, which Christ, in his own person, made  
 when he cried, *if it be possible let this cup pass*  
*from me*. Thus God made use of wicked men as  
 his sword against Christ, to smite him and take  
 away his life.

IN like manner God had, before, made use of  
 the Assyrians as his *rod* to correct and chastise  
 the people of Israel. In such language as this  
 doth the Prophet foretel the evils which God was  
 about to bring upon his people by the hand  
 of the proud Assyrians; “ O Assyrian, the *rod*  
 “ of mine *anger*, and the staff in their hand is  
 “ mine *indignation*. I will send him against an hy-  
 “ pocritical nation; and against the people of *my*  
 “ *wrath* will I give him a charge—to tread  
 “ them down like the mire of the streets.”<sup>4</sup>  
 When, therefore, God makes use of the same in-  
 struments,

<sup>1</sup> *Pf.* 7. 11, 13.    <sup>2</sup> *Rom.* 13. 4.    <sup>3</sup> *Pf.* 17. 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Isai.* 10. 5, 6.

struments, *wicked men*, in bringing evil upon Christ that he had, again and again, made use of in executing his wrath; when they are expressly called his *sword*, which is never drawn but for the execution of vengeance; And, when this *sword* is expressly called up by God himself, and commissioned to smite Christ; the whole rule and analogy of divine dispensation, and every concurring circumstance, lead us to view this astonishing event as an awful manifestation of divine displeasure. All these considerations being taken fully into view, if we cannot read the *holy anger* of God in the death of Jesus Christ, it will be difficult to determine that *this* is written in legible characters, in *any evil* that God has ever yet brought upon men.

BUT, further, we are expressly told that *Christ was made a curse*. The Apostle says "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, *being made a curse for us*; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." These words plainly suppose that the sufferings of Christ on the tree, were a fruit and manifestation of divine anger. For,

I. THE curse that Christ suffered, or was made, was none other than the curse of God. The words which the Apostle quotes in proof of Christ's being made a curse, are these, *For he that is hanged, (on a tree) is accursed of God*. And, if Christ's being crucified, and hanged on a tree, are a proof that he was made a *curse*, they are equally a proof that the curse which he was made, was *the curse of God*. For, every one that was hanged on a tree, was accursed of God; Christ's being hung upon a tree was a proof that

<sup>a</sup> Galat. 3, 13.



he was made a curse ; and therefore, a proof that, if he was made *any curse*, it was *the curse of God*—if he suffered, or endured *any curse*, he suffered and endured *the curse of God*.

2. WE know of no other curse of God, than what is threatned in his holy law. God inflicts, or executes, no curses but such as are denounced in his law. The holy scriptures, certainly, know of no other curse, and treat of no other curses that are ever, either denounced, or executed, by the Deity, than those which are penalties of the law, and with which the breakers of the law are threatned.

Therefore,

3. CHRIST'S suffering the curse of God, was his suffering the *curse of the law*. If Christ endured the curse of God, and the holy scriptures know of no other curse of God than the curse of the law ; it plainly follows that Christ endured, or was made, the curse of the law. And that it was *the curse of the law* that Christ was made, is manifestly implied in the words under consideration. The Apostle saith that Christ hath redeemed us from the *curse of the law*, being *made a curse* for us. He was then treating of the *curse of the law* and no other : He had just said that as many as are of *the works of the law*, are under the curse. And then asserts, that it is from *the curse of the law* that Christ hath redeemed us. From *this curse* Christ redeems his people by being *made a curse* for them : Which evidently implies that it was *the curse of the law* that Christ was made. There is not here given the least hint of any other curse ; nor any thing said to lead the thoughts to any other, or suggest the most distant idea of any other. And as an evidence

dence that Christ, who, it was well known, had been hanged on a tree, was made a curse; the Apostle quotes a passage from the old testament in which it is asserted that he who is hanged on a tree *is accursed of God*, and applies it to Christ. This makes it manifest that *the curse of God*, which is *the curse of the law*, was laid upon Christ: And by *his* being made *this curse*, he redeemed his people from the curse of the law. The particle *for*, with which the Apostle introduceth the text from the Mosaic law, plainly shows that the passage is not *exegetical*, nor brought with design to explain the *nature* of the curse which Christ was made; but to *prove* that he was indeed made *a curse*. Or should it be admitted, (which however there is no reason for admitting) that the Apostle designed, in those last words, to let us know what the curse was which Christ endured; still it will be evident that he was made *a curse* in which God manifested his *anger*: And, therefore, that the sufferings and death of Christ were indeed expressions of divine anger. It therefore follows, that the scriptures plainly teach us that the fruits of divine displeasure were endured by Christ, especially when he hung upon the tree.

SOME have supposed that to represent Christ as enduring *the curse of the law*, would necessarily involve in it the idea of *his being a sinner*, and of his feeling those horrors and that despair which are peculiar to sinners. And this supposition is founded on an apprehension that *spiritual death* is a great, if not principal part of the curse of the law. But this is a supposition quite without foundation. *Spiritual death*, as the phrase is commonly used, means a person's being perfectly under the dominion and power of sin; or to ex-  
press

press it in scripture-language, being *dead in trespasses and sins* : which is the same as his being *wholly and totally a sinner*. But this surely can with no propriety be considered as a curse upon the sinner. Sin is *voluntary* ; it is what is *chosen* by the sinner ; and is not the *curse itself*, but that which *exposes to it, and incurs it*. It would be strange that for committing *one sin*, which must be a voluntary act, God should *threaten* the sinner with committing *another*, which must be equally voluntary ; and make *this* the penalty of the former—the curse to be endured for it. At this rate, the penalties of the law could not possibly be any terror to the sinner.

THE penalties of the law, therefore, must of necessity, and in the nature of things, be *natural evils*, not *moral*. By bringing *natural evil* it is, that God expresseth his displeasure against *moral*. *Natural evils* are punishments, but *moral* are not : The *former*, therefore, and only the former, are the sanctions, or curses of the law. So that Christ's enduring the curse of the law, would by no means imply that he was a sinner ;—that God was angry with Christ ; or that Christ felt those sensations of despair, and those horrors of an accusing conscience, which will necessarily accompany, and be a bitter part of the sufferings of *sinners*, when *they* endure the curse of the law.

NATURAL evils which express the anger of God, are the *curse* of the law. Natural evils Christ suffered, and those to a high degree. These are all a curse, and the curse of God ; and, evidently represented as the curse of the law. And when we consider the dignity of the person, and the excellency of the character of Christ ; if the na-

tural evils he suffered from the hand of God, were sufficient to express to the views of creatures, as high a degree of divine displeasure, as the natural evils which God brings on the sinner himself, when he executes the curse upon him; it can be no reflection upon Christ, nor imply the least defect in his character, to consider him as having endured the *curse of the law*, and *in this sense* having been made a curse for his people, that they might be the righteousness of God in him.

BUT it may, perhaps, be here objected, that  
 “ As Christ was infinitely far from being, him-  
 “ self, an object of the divine anger; the natural  
 “ evils which were brought upon him were no  
 “ expressions of divine displeasure, either against  
 “ him, or against any other person. It may be  
 “ urged that God, in his providence, put the  
 “ Saviour into that trying situation in which he  
 “ lived and died, in order to give him opportu-  
 “ nity to exhibit the most exalted virtue, and  
 “ display the excellencies and glories of his own  
 “ character to the best advantage. And if this  
 “ were the true reason of the sufferings of Christ,  
 “ the evils which he endured were so far from  
 “ being any expressions of divine anger, that they  
 “ were rather marks of divine favour: And,  
 “ therefore, in all the sufferings that Christ en-  
 “ dured, great and terrible as they are, we can  
 “ behold nothing more than marks of favour and  
 “ honour to the person of Christ.

IN answer to this objection it may be replied, that the idea of the end of Christ's sufferings contained in the objection before us, however natural it may *be thought* to be in itself, is far from  
 corresponding



corresponding with the representations given of it by the inspired writers. The *Scriptures* teach us that God's *sword* was awakened and drawn against Christ—that he was made a *curse* ; and that this curse was *the curse of God*. Here he is represented as being made a *sin-offering*—being *bruised and put to grief by Jehovah*, and *wounded for our transgressions*. And this is language never made use of in the holy scriptures, to paint divine complacency and favour. *Swords* are not drawn against any one for any other purpose than that of expressing displeasure. *Favours* are not usually conferred at the point of the *sword*. And if the evils which were brought on Christ, are to be considered in no other light than that of *divine favours* to the person who suffered ; we can see no propriety in their being called a *curse, the curse of God, &c.* If the sufferings of Christ were only marks of *divine favour*, and as it were *the post of honour* given to the great Captain of salvation ; *this idea* would have been much more easy and naturally conveyed by other and very different expressions from those that are made use of in the sacred writings. It is hard to see how *this* would authorise us to consider *Christ* as being made a *curse*, and being *pierced* by God's sword, the sword of divine vengeance. The post of honour is never considered as the *curse* of him who appoints to it : especially when that appointment is a *mark of distinction and favour*. And if the curse which *Christ* was made is not a token of divine anger ; if the sword of God which was awakened and drawn against *Christ*, and which actually executed him, and took away his life ; did not express divine anger ; a doubt may immediately arise whether God's curse *in any case whatever* really expresseth

expresseth anger. If, in that case, it expressed *nothing* more than kind purposes toward the Saviour, where will be the evidence that, in any other case, it expresseth any thing more than kind, benevolent purposes toward the sufferer? If *the curse of God, the curse of the law*, when laid upon Christ, was no mark of divine displeasure; no evils, no sufferings whatever, merely from their being the curse of God, and the curse of the law, will exhibit divine anger. And of course the curses, the sanctions of the law, do not hold out divine indignation to view.

THE *word of God* is the authority by which we are to determine, both the *end* and the *import* of the sufferings of Christ. And, when we are *here* taught that Christ, in dying, *was made a curse*—that he was made so by Jehovah—that this curse which he was made was the *curse of God*; if the curses of God, and of his law, hold out anger and indignation to view, it cannot consistently be denied that the sufferings and death of Christ were indeed expressions of divine anger. Accordingly, the redemption of Christ's people is constantly and abundantly attributed, in the holy scriptures, to the *sufferings, the death, the blood* of the Saviour; and, by *his* being made a *curse*, are *they* redeemed from the curse of the law.

FURTHER; in confirmation of *this view* of the sufferings of Christ, as being expressive of the anger of God against sin, it is worthy of notice that the virtue of his atonement is constantly set to the score of his *sufferings*, both by Christ himself, and by his apostles. Thus Christ says, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man *be lifted up*;  
“ that

“ that whosoever believeth on him should not  
 “ perish, but have eternal life.”<sup>1</sup> Again; “ And  
 “ I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all  
 “ men unto me.”<sup>2</sup> When his disciples were  
 confounded on seeing him whom they beleived to  
 be the Messiah suffer death; immediately after  
 his resurrection he reproves them in the following  
 manner, “ O fools, and slow of heart to believe  
 “ all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not  
 “ Christ to have *suffered these things*—? And he  
 “ said unto them, These are the words which I  
 “ spake unto you while I was yet with you, that  
 “ all things must be fulfilled which were written  
 “ in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and  
 “ in the psalms concerning me. And said unto  
 “ them, thus it is written, and thus it *behooved*  
 “ *Christ to suffer* and to rise from the dead on the  
 “ third day.”<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, the efficacy of the  
 atonement made by Christ is constantly represen-  
 ted as being in his *blood*. Speaking of Christ, the A-  
 postle says, “ In whom we have redemption through  
 “ his *blood*, the forgiveness of sins. according to  
 “ the riches of his grace.”<sup>4</sup> And, the Apostle  
 again saith that “ without *shedding of blood* there  
 “ is no remission.”<sup>5</sup> Therefore it is that “ the  
 “ *blood* of Christ cleanseth from all sin:”<sup>6</sup> And,  
 the robes of saints are said to be *made white in*  
*the blood of the Lamb.*<sup>7</sup>

CHRIST'S *obedience* unto death was infinitely  
 pleasing to the Father; and, as hath been before  
 observed, of infinite importance. Without *this*,  
 his *sufferings and death* could have been no atone-  
 ment for sin. And, for his *obedience unto death* it  
 is that *He* is highly exalted, and hath a name gi-  
 ven

<sup>1</sup> John, 3. 14, 15.    <sup>2</sup> John, 12. 32.    <sup>3</sup> Luke, 24. 25,  
 26, 44, 46.    <sup>4</sup> Ephes. 1. 7.    <sup>5</sup> Heb. 9, 22.    <sup>6</sup> John, 1. 7.  
<sup>7</sup> Rev. 7. 14.

ven him which is above every name.' Yet the *obedience* of Christ, important and glorious as it was, is never once spoken of as making atonement: Nor, are his disciples ever represented as being purged and saved by his *obedience*; but, invariably, by his *blood*, his sufferings and death.

Now, if the whole efficacy of the death of Christ as an atonement for the sins of the world, consisted in the perfection of *his personal obedience*; we know not how to account for it that this efficacy of it to cleanse from sin, should be constantly represented in figurative language, and that too, when the idea of the perfection of this obedience is not, at all, heightened by the figure made use of to express it; but would have been, at least, as perfectly clear and intelligible, had it been said that his people were redeemed *by his obedience unto death*. Figurative language is not made use of, in the holy scriptures, unless it be where the ideas to be conveyed by it, are designed to be less obvious than if expressed in plainer terms; or, with a view to give them *greater* clearness and perspicuity. But, if the sufferings and death of the Saviour were of no other importance, as an atonement for sin, than as a testimony of the perfection and height of his obedience; it is hard to be accounted for, that the holy Ghost should constantly represent the efficacy of the atonement as being in the *death*, the *blood* of Christ: And much more so, that he should speak of Christ as being a *sin-offering*, and his *death* as being a *curse*—*the curse of God*, and the effect of *God's sword* drawn against him, and commissioned to smite and execute him; and, in this way represent Christ as falling a victim to divine justice.

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<sup>1</sup> *Phil.* 2. 8, 9.



THESE considerations, it is apprehended, sufficiently show that there was some further end to be answered by the *sufferings and death of Christ* than a mere exhibition of the strength and perfection of his personal obedience: And, that *this*, would by no means warrant that mode of expression which is frequently and abundantly made use of, by the inspired writers, in treating this important subject. To suppose that the *death of Christ* answered no other end than to illustrate his obedience, would, certainly, imply that the figures made use of in representing it, are bold and strong beyond any parallel to be found in the whole word of God; and that the images glow in colours in which it was never designed they should be viewed. While, on the other hand, the foregoing observations, as would be but natural to suppose, was in fact the case, evidently bring into view the FATHER as sitting to hold the rights of government, while the SON was acting the part of a servant; and having himself a glorious and awfully majestic part to act, while a sin-offering is made by Christ, we behold the high and holy character of HIM to whom it is made; and, see the awful manifestations of that divine displeasure, the exhibitions of which can no more be suppressed, than God himself can cease to be infinitely holy; or can be restrained from expressing, in his government over a fallen world.

## C H A P T E R VII.

*In which it is shown that the anger of God which appeared, and was expressed, in the sufferings of Christ; was really against sinners.*

SOME have apprehended that it is impossible the sufferings of an innocent person, should express anger against the guilty; And, on this ground have supposed it absurd to consider Christ as, in any sense, a *substitute*, in his sufferings, for sinners. Therefore against the idea of atonement being made by the *sufferings* of Christ, it is objected that “ we cannot comprehend how the  
“ punishment, or sufferings of an *innocent person*,  
“ should express displeasure against the guilty.”

THIS objection implies that it is essential to the character of God, that in his providential government, he should treat every one according to his own character and deserts: And that as far as natural good and evil, brought on moral beings, express the divine approbation, or the contrary; the glory of God, and the rectitude of his government requires that he confer only *good* on the righteous, and *evil* on the vicious. On this hypothesis, therefore, either one or the other of the following things must be true: viz.

I. THAT it is inconsistent with the character of God, and the rectitude and glory of his government, to exercise *mercy* to sinners in delivering them from the the natural evils their sins deserve. For, according to the objection before us, in the rewards and punishments of the future world, God only expresseth his approbation and disapprobation of the several characters of the different persons

persons who are the subjects of them. If it be impossible for God to express *displeasure* against *sinners*, by bringing natural evil on *Christ*; it must be equally impossible for God to express *approbation* of the character of *Christ*, by conferring natural good on *sinners*. If God can intelligibly express his approbation of the *obedience* of *Christ* by conferring  *blessings* on *sinners*; he can intelligibly express his abhorrence of the *disobedience* of men, by laying the *curse* on *Christ*. The objection suppoeth it absurd that there should be an interchange of persons, between *Christ* and *sinners*, as to the  *blessing* and the *curse* of obedience and the reverse. And if this be absurd, the salvation of *sinners* is not to be considered as the reward of *Christ's* obedience; but of *their own* penitence and return to their duty. And consequently the design of *Christ's* coming into the world, could be no more than to bring the good news that *penitence* shall obtain pardon; and of his death, to seal the truth of it with his blood. On this supposition all the blessings that will ever be conferred on the followers of *Christ*, in the future world, are to be considered only as so many marks of the divine approbation of their characters: And there is no other meritorious cause of the salvation of *sinners*, than their own penitence and return to their duty. This, it is easy to see, at once excludes every idea of gospel *mercy*, and of the meritorious righteousness of *Christ* as a ground of the salvation of *sinners*. If the salvation of *sinners* be only a reward of their own penitence and obedience, all ideas of *gospel-grace* are wholly excluded. For, it is a *maxim* of the gospel that, to him that *worketh*, the reward is not reckoned of *grace*, but of debt.<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Rom. 4. 4.

IF it be essential to the glory of God that, in the *good* and *evil* he brings on his creatures, he should treat every one according to his deserts: the consequence is that, in his providential government in dispensing blessings and evils, he never doth, in fact, express any displeasure, in any way whatever, against those who are vessels of mercy. From no natural evil whatever, no adversity or sufferings, are we authorised to conclude that there is, or ever was, in the divine mind, the least displeasure against them for any sin they ever committed against God.

ON this supposition it is manifest that it is not essential to the glory of God, and the rectitude of that government which he is actually exercising over men, that he ever should express displeasure against us, for any of our conduct, by bringing *natural evil* upon us. For, if, in consistency with the rectitude of this government, he may save a part of the human race without expressing his approbation of their conduct by *any natural evils whatever*; it is evident that the glory of this government could not be sullied, nor the rectitude of it rendered suspicious, by a total suspension of punishments: And, notwithstanding all the wickedness that has taken place; the divine government may appear perfectly equal and glorious, if no sinner be ever punished.

2. IF it be admitted that it is essential to the glory of God, and the rectitude of his government, that his anger be in some way expressed, in his providence, against the wickedness of those whom he pardons and saves, the objection before us must imply that divine anger against the sins of men, may be manifested to a degree  
fully



fully sufficient to support the honour of the government of God, without any *natural evils*. The objection supposes that the natural evils brought on Christ did not express divine anger against the sins of men; And, *that*, for this obvious reason, that the punishment, or sufferings of an innocent person, cannot express displeasure against the guilty. If, therefore, those natural evils which were brought on the person of Christ, were not expressions of divine anger against the sins of men; they did not *in any way* express divine anger: because, it is on all hands admitted that they expressed no degree of anger against Christ.

If, then, in the sufferings and death of Christ, God expressed no displeasure against the wickedness of the world: it is manifest that, by *no natural evils whatever* doth he express anger against sinners whom he pardons and saves. And therefore, whatever be the rebellion and wickedness of men, the honour and rectitude of divine government by no means infer a necessity of *natural evils*; but, the glory and dignity of the character of God may be fully supported without the execution of punishments.

If, in the sufferings and death of Christ, God expressed any degree of anger whatever; it must have been *against sinners*: because, no degree of it existed, against Christ. But if, on the other hand, the *natural evils* endured by the Saviour, were no expressions of divine anger; it most clearly follows that God may, consistently with the rectitude and glory of his government, pardon and save sinners without expressing *by natural evils* any degree of displeasure against them for  
their

their sins. And, if God may do this consistently with the rectitude and glory of his *government*; he may, also, consistently with the *moral law*, which is the great *rule* of his moral government. For, whatever God may do consistently with the honour of his *government*, he may also do, consistently with the honour of his law: And, of course, the *law itself* doth not require that the sinner should be *punished*. So long, therefore, as we believe that, neither the glory of the divine character, the rectitude of his government, nor the honour of his law, require that sinners should be *punished*; we cannot possibly, with the least reason, entertain any fears or expectations of future punishment: but, must, of necessity, view *all the awful threatenings* of the law only as so many *scare-crows* held out to terrify weak minds.

THESE are the obvious and necessary consequences of denying the *necessity of punishments*, in the divine government, when *moral evil hath actually taken place*. To *this* conclusion will the sentiment that God may consistently pardon and save sinners without expressing, *by any natural evils*, his displeasure against them, evidently lead; and, in *this* will it manifestly terminate.

BUT, if it be granted, on the other hand, that the honour of the divine government forbids that sinners should be pardoned and saved without God's expressing in some way, *by natural evils*, his righteous displeasure against them, for their sins; it must *of course* be that this displeasure be expressed by natural evils brought on an *innocent person*: because the salvation in question, is from *such and only from such* natural evils as the sinner deserves. If this displeasure be expressed by natural

tural evils brought on the *sinner himself*, the *sinner* then is *not saved*. It must, of necessity, be therefore, that if it be expressed by natural evils brought on *any one*, it must be, by their being brought on one *who is not a sinner*: And, therefore, displeasure against the *guilty* is expressed by sufferings brought on the *innocent*.

To say, therefore, that displeasure against the *guilty*, cannot be expressed by evils brought on an *innocent person*, at once denies, either the *necessity* of punishment; or *room* for pardon. For if it be essential to the glory of God, that he express displeasure against wickedness by *any natural evils*; these evils must be endured, either by the *guilty*, or by some one who is *innocent*. If they are endured by the wicked themselves, the *sinner is not*, yea *cannot be pardoned*. If the sinner be pardoned, and the displeasure of God nevertheless expressed in *natural evils*; it must of necessity be that this is done in natural evils brought on one who is *innocent*. Thus evidently doth the objection under consideration deny any necessity, arising either from the law, or the character of God, that sinners should ever be punished; or, it denies that sinners of mankind will ever be delivered from that punishment which is their just desert according to the tenour of the divine law.

But it may perhaps be denied that either of these consequences are involved in the sentiment that *the anger of God against the wicked cannot be expressed in the sufferings of one who is righteous*. It may be urged that “as the obedience of Christ, “especially under very heavy and severe trials, “expressed a very high degree of love to *holi-  
ness*; this, of course, exhibited a proportionable  
“aversion

“ aversion from sin. And as Christ was *God manifest in flesh*, whatever hatred and aversions were expressed by him, were the hatred—the aversions of GOD. And therefore *God’s* hatred of iniquity appeared and was expressed in the *obedience* of Christ. His acting uniformly against the cause of sin, very naturally and necessarily expressed his displeasure against the sinner.”

BUT in reply to this reasoning it may be observed :

1. THAT the objector, in taking this course, splits upon the very rock he means to avoid. It is urged that the supposition, that *the displeasure of God against the wicked, cannot be seen in the sufferings of an innocent person*, implies, either that the wicked will be universally punished ; or, that the character and law of God do not require that God’s displeasure against the wicked should ever be expressed in *any natural evils, any sufferings* whatever. The argument before us admits that the divine being may so act against sin, and oppose it in such a manner *in his own conduct*, as to render *punishments* unnecessary : Or, at least to render it consistent with the spirit of the law to forgive *penitents* without expressing *by natural evils*, any displeasure against them for their sins. But if God may forgive *some sinners*, without testifying his anger against them by natural evils ; it is difficult to see why he may not *all*. If the honour of the divine law may be so supported *without natural evils*, as to make it consistent with the character of the governor of the world, to exercise his grace in bringing *some* to repentance, and then forgiving them ; we see not why  
it



it may not *all*. We can see no other objection against the salvation of *all* than this, viz. That the character and conduct of God could not appear to harmonize with his perfect law, unless he expressed displeasure against the rebellion of men by *natural evils*. But the argument which pleads that God's displeasure is *sufficiently* expressed, to answer the purposes of law and government, in the *obedience* of Christ, removes this objection. And, therefore, it implies that the honor of God's law and moral government may be supported without the execution of punishments: At least, that there is no necessity of God's testifying against the wickedness of men by *natural evils*, in order to its being consistent with his character to pardon and save sinners.

2. It may justly be scrupled whether it can, with propriety, be said that the holy and obedient life of Christ *expressed any divine displeasure* against men for their sins:—At least, any disposition, in the divine mind, to *punish* men for their sins. “God sent not his Son into the world “to *condemn* the world; but that the world “through him might be saved.”<sup>1</sup> Christ's disposition to *obey* the law, was *acted out and expressed* in his life on earth. And whatever reasons there might be, from any considerations, to suppose he entertained a disposition within himself to *punish* sinners; still his own *personal obedience* to the law did not *express it*; in *this* it was not acted out in its proper and natural fruits. This disposition of the divine redeemer remains to be exhibited and displayed on another day. And if there were no other *expression* of divine displeasure against sin necessary, than *this*; we have no reason

<sup>1</sup> John, 3. 17.

son to expect that any other expression of it will, in fact, be ever made. Accordingly,

3. IF God's being manifest in flesh, and acting against the *cause of sin* in a holy and obedient life, and subduing the power of it in his people, be all the way in which it is necessary his anger against sin should be expressed; we have abundant reason to conclude, that neither the spirit of the law, nor the honour of the divine government require it should ever be expressed in any other way. And therefore punishments are far from being *necessary* under the divine government. For, on this hypothesis, God would appear to act more decidedly and compleatly against the cause of sin, and so of course express higher displeasure against it, by wholly eradicating it out of the heart of every moral being, and setting all his creatures above the reach of natural evil.

THESE are but the natural and obvious consequences of the opinion that the displeasure of God against men, for their sins, was not expressed in the sufferings and death of Christ.

As an evidence that the sufferings of Christ were expressions of divine anger against *men* for their sins; it is to be observed,

1. THAT *these sufferings* were, in reality, expressions of divine anger. *These* were a *curse*, the *curse of God*, which can, in the nature of things, be no other than an expression of anger. The sword of God, the sword of divine justice, was called up, and commissioned against Christ: and smote, and took away his life. But it is unnecessary to repeat what has been said on this subject in a former chapter. We proceed,

2. To

2. To observe that the anger of God which appeared and was expressed in the sufferings of Christ, *could not be against the person of the Saviour*. Christ always did those things that pleased the Father.<sup>1</sup> He is God's beloved Son in whom he is well pleased.<sup>2</sup> How often was the voice of God heard from heaven, declaring concerning Christ, while he was on earth, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."<sup>3</sup> Never did the Father view this Son of his love with greater complacency and delight, than when he was making his soul an offering for sin: And never did he feel a more infinite tenderness for him, than while he was wounding him for *our* transgressions, and bruising him *for our iniquities*.

3. God is *invariably* displeased at sin; and, he never has the least degree of anger against any of his creatures, but *sinners*. The law of God, which expresseth his *very mind and will*, curseth those, and only those, who continue not in all things written in the book of it, to do them. When any of God's creatures commit sin, they provoke his anger. But, where there is no sin, it cannot be that God is offended. And, as God *is* angry with the wicked every day;<sup>4</sup> every exhibition of divine anger must be against sinners.

4. It is evident, and is generally confessed, that the happy and blessed fruits of *Christ's glorious righteousness*, are conferred upon *sinners of mankind*, and enjoyed by them. The Apostle saith, "As by the offence of one, judgment  
" came upon all men unto condemnation; even

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" so

<sup>1</sup> John, 8 29. <sup>2</sup> Matt. 12. 18. <sup>3</sup> Matth. 3, 17. and  
17, 5. <sup>4</sup> Ps. 7. 11.

“ so by the *righteousness* of one, the free gift came  
 “ upon all men unto justification of life. For, as by  
 “ one man’s disobedience, many were made sin-  
 “ ners; so by the obedience of one, shall many  
 “ be made righteous.”<sup>1</sup> And *this one person*, by  
 whose righteousness the free gift comes upon men  
 to justification of life, the connection of the Apo-  
 stle’s discourse evidently proves to be the *Lord Je-  
 sus Christ*. “ Therefore” he says again, “ by  
 “ *the deeds of the law* there shall no flesh be justi-  
 “ fied in his sight : for by the law is the knowledge  
 “ of sin. But now the *righteousness of God with-  
 “ out the law* is manifested, being witnessed by  
 “ the law and the prophets ; even the righteous-  
 “ ness of God which is by *faith of Jesus Christ*  
 “ unto all, and upon all them that believe.”<sup>2</sup>

These passages, with many others in the Scrip-  
 tures, make it evident that sinners of mankind re-  
 ceive and enjoy the rewards, the happy fruits of  
 the righteousness of Christ; And, that the benefits of  
 his righteousness are, of grace, bestowed upon sin-  
 ners. This is the true and only proper import  
 of the *imputation* of Christ’s righteousness to be-  
 lievers—This is to have his righteousness *im-  
 puted* to them ; for *them* to receive and enjoy the  
 benefits, the happy fruits of it.

ADD to these considerations, the frequent and  
 express declarations of the word of God respect-  
 ing the *end* of the sufferings of Christ, can there  
 be any remaining doubt whether the displeasure  
 of God which was exhibited in them, were against  
 sinners? No point can be made more evident by *ex-  
 press divine declarations* than this. Here, we are told  
 that Christ “ was made under the law, that he  
 “ might redeem them that are under the law,  
 “ that they might receive the adoption of sons.”<sup>3</sup>

Here,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 5. 18, 19. <sup>2</sup> Rom. 3. 20, 22. <sup>3</sup> Galat. 4. 4, 5.



Here, we are taught that Christ united himself to his people, by a strong and invincible love, that he might recover and save them. The nearness of his relation to his people, and the intimacy of the union which subsists between them, are such as to require the strongest similitudes, the boldest metaphors, to express them. He is the *vine* of which they are the branches:<sup>1</sup> the *husband* of whom the church is the *spouse*;<sup>2</sup> the *head* of which his people are the *body*; even so that *they* are members of his *flesh*, and of his *bones*.<sup>3</sup>

THIS is the relation in which we are taught, by the unerring oracles of truth, that Christ stands to his people. And, standing in *this* relation to them, it is expressly declared by the Spirit of truth, that he was wounded for *their transgressions*, and bruised for *their iniquities*:<sup>4</sup> that, he was made a *curse for them*:<sup>5</sup> that, he was delivered, (that is to death,) *for our offences*:<sup>6</sup> that, he was once *offered to bear the sins of many*:<sup>7</sup> and, that he *bore our sins* on the tree.<sup>8</sup> It is expressly asserted that Christ *died for the ungodly*—that he *died for us*:<sup>9</sup> that, he *suffered for the unjust*, that he might bring them to God:<sup>10</sup> that, he was *sacrificed for us*.<sup>11</sup> And, to close the whole, Christ himself tells us that he came *to give his life a ransom for many*; and was *the good shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep*.<sup>12</sup>

BESIDE the very unscriptural consequences which necessarily flow from a denial of the possibility that the *anger of God against sinners should appear and be expressed in the sufferings of an innocent*

<sup>1</sup> John, 15. 5. <sup>2</sup> Isai. 54. 5. 6. <sup>3</sup> Ephes. 5. 30. <sup>4</sup> Isai. 53. 5. <sup>5</sup> Galat. 3. 13. <sup>6</sup> Rom. 4. 25. <sup>7</sup> Heb. 9. 28. <sup>8</sup> 1. Pet. 2. 24. <sup>9</sup> Rom. 5. 6, 8. <sup>10</sup> 1. Pet. 3. 18. <sup>11</sup> 1. Cor. 5. 7. <sup>12</sup> John. 10. 11, 15.

cent person; these passages of scripture, together with the observations immediately preceding, are so many concurring proofs, and unequivocal testimonies that, in the sufferings of Christ, *this was in fact the case*. And, all the mighty power which Christ displayed while on earth; every miracle that he wrought; and, more still, if possible, his triumphant resurrection and ascension to glory; together with all the marvellous effects of it, which have since appeared upon earth; are so many additional testimonies, so many irrefragable proofs that *the righteous displeasure of God, which shone in the sufferings of the Saviour, had really, for its object, the sins of men*.

IF, the Deity himself had been about to contrive the most effectual means for giving conviction, to all creatures, that the anger which burned *in the sufferings of his dear Son*, was not against *him*, but against *sinful men*; What could he have done more, what more effectual method could he have taken, to ascertain such a truth? To see the fruits of divine anger alight upon the immaculate Lamb of God, when he came to deliver his people from the power of sin, and from the wrath and curse of God; and, then, behold the people of Christ, who are themselves infinitely guilty, reaping the happy fruits of divine righteousness; so strongly indicates, in itself, an interchange of persons, between Christ and his people, as to sufferings and rewards, as hardly leaves room for a doubt whether this were really the case. Under *these circumstances*, the express declarations of the word of God must, surely be sufficient to put the matter out of all dispute; and, leave full conviction in every candid mind, that

that the *sufferings of Christ* were, in reality, expressions of divine displeasure *against men for their sins*.

BUT, to all this it is objected that “ The rules of *righteousness* never admit, that the *innocent* should be punished for the *guilty*. If, as *Abraham*, the father of the faithful, reasoned, that it be far from God to slay the *righteous with the wicked*, and, that the *righteous should be as the wicked*:<sup>1</sup> much farther must it be from God to slay the *righteous instead of the wicked*.”

THIS objection, it is to be observed, as well as those to which we have before been attending, supposes that, if *any* punishments are necessary in the divine government, they must be laid only on the guilty; if it be necessary that God express anger by *any natural evils*, they must be inflicted on those who deserve them: And, therefore, if it be consistent with the divine rectitude in *any instance* to pardon the sinner, it must be that the rectitude of divine government does not require that the anger of God against sinners should ever be expressed by *natural evils*: And, consequently, that the *law of God* doth not require it.

THIS objection, at least, supposeth that the law of God doth not require that in *every instance* he should express displeasure against sinners by inflicting *natural evils* upon them: and therefore, that there is not a disposition in the divine mind, that could ever be truly and properly delineated in this way. But, if the law and character of God do not require that this should be done in *every instance*, we cannot see with what propriety

<sup>1</sup> *Genes.* 18. 25.

ety it should be done in *any*. And, if this be the case, we may fairly conclude it never would have been done, even if Christ had not come into the world. According to this hypothesis, therefore, we must suppose that the true end of the coming of Christ was to relieve the minds of men from those unnecessary fears which *the law* of God, unless smoothed and softened by some milder and more generous dispensation, would necessarily beget in them. But if this were the true design of the coming of Christ, it is difficult to see how it could with propriety be prophesied of him, that he should *magnify the law and make it honourable*; and how *this* could be a ground of God's being well pleased for his *righteousness*' sake. Surely the Saviour himself had not this view of the end of his mission, when he declared, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill. For, verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

FURTHER; the objection supposeth that, though it be inconsistent with the righteousness of the Governor of the world, to treat the *righteous* as the *wicked*; yet, the nature of the divine government is such as doth not require that the *wicked* should be distinguished from the *righteous*; but admits that the *rewards* of righteousness, may be equally and indiscriminately bestowed on the *wicked*, and on the *righteous*. And what ideas of *government* remain, after we have adopted those modes and rules of administration which equally admit the *righteous* and the *wicked* to the *rewards of obedience*, it must be difficult for any one to ascertain.

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<sup>1</sup> *Isaiak.* 42, 21.    <sup>2</sup> *Mat.* 5. 17, 18.



It is readily admitted that it would not be inconsistent with the rules of common justice for the Deity, by his *mere authority and power to subject* an innocent person to sufferings. But, the objector himself admits that the holy and innocent Saviour of the world, was indeed subjected to many hardships and sufferings. And we must deny an universal divine providence, unless we suppose that Christ was subjected to these sufferings by the *power and will of God*. Therefore, fact itself opposeth the very spirit of the objection; unless it be urged, in vindication of God's righteousness, that *volenti non fit injuria*; and that Christ, *willingly and cheerfully*, for the purposes of the general good, *submitted to these natural evils*. But if this maxim be adopted as a solution of the difficulty which *real fact* presents to us in the divine government; it will equally afford us a solution of the difficulty contained in the objection before us. For if it be consistent with the character and righteousness of God to bring a small degree of natural evil on an innocent person, upon his freely consenting to it; it is equally consistent to bring greater degrees, if he hath the subject's free consent. If the consent of the subject will justify it in one case, it will also in the other. And if it was a reality that Christ willingly subjected himself to those natural evils which the Father in fact laid upon him, for the purposes of the general good: the supposition that *these evils* were expressions of divine anger against sinners, will not at all obscure the *evidence* of the righteousness of God.

If to promote the general good, the Saviour freely and voluntarily subjected himself to those natural evils which were the proper fruits and testimonies

testimonies of divine anger against the sins of men, there was no more injustice done him in their being laid upon him, than if he had subjected himself voluntarily to natural evils on any other account, or for any other reward. And if the consideration of a *reward*, would justify laying evils upon him *on any other account, or for any other purpose*; it would, also, justify laying evils upon him as *expressions of divine anger against sinners*, in case he could receive a sufficient and full reward. But if the general good of the universe were better secured, and more highly advanced in *this way*, than in any other, the glory of God in the salvation of sinners will be esteemed, by the Saviour, a full and ample reward for all his hard labour and sufferings. Accordingly this *is* the way in which the holy Scriptures teach us that the Saviour of the world is rewarded for the arduous work which he accomplished by his death. “He shall see of the travel  
“ of his soul, and shall be *satisfied*: by his  
“ knowledge shall my righteous servant justify  
“ many, for he shall bear their iniquities.”<sup>1</sup>

WHATEVER maxims be adopted in vindication of the divine *righteousness* in bringing on the innocent Saviour those natural evils which he *actually* endured, may be improved to equal advantage, in vindicating the *righteousness* of God in expressing his anger against *sinners* in the *pains and sufferings of the Saviour*.

THERE is certainly no natural absurdity in supposing that Christ should freely consent to *bear the iniquities* of his people; and that, he consenting to it, the Father should *lay them upon him*

<sup>1</sup> *Isaiah, 53. 11.*

*him.* Nor is there in this method of the recovery of sinners, the least appearance of unrighteousness in God, or *injustice* to the Redeemer. And when the holy Scriptures are so very full and express to the case, as hath been already shown; no difficulty can remain in supposing that the anger of God which appeared and was expressed in the sufferings of Christ, was, in reality, against sinners.

## C H A P T E R VIII.

*Showing the consistency of full atonement with free pardon.*

**M**ANY have supposed that the opinion of the sinner's being *pardoned* upon *full atonement* made for his sins, is a palpable absurdity. And, therefore, that the doctrine of *atonement*, and the doctrines of *free grace* are utterly irreconcilable. "For," say they, "when we have received the debt, what *grace* is there in freeing the debtor? And *that*, whether the money be paid by the debtor himself, or by some other person." Were this a similitude which would properly apply, in the case before us; it is acknowledged there would be a difficulty. But, this objection arises from a wrong construction of the doctrine of atonement.

IN order to show the inconsistency of *atonement* with the *free grace* of God in the salvation of sinners; nothing further will be necessary than to state.

I. THE nature of *pardon* and *grace*: and show in what cases, and under what circumstances,

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ces, the sinner may be the subject of them. And,

II. To show what it is that constitutes the nature, and makes the essence of atonement.

I. WE are to state the nature of *pardon* and *grace*; and show in what cases, and under what circumstances, the sinner may be the subject of them.

THE *gospel-idea* of *grace* is, in general, that of *good* conferred where *evil* is deserved. It is essential to the idea of *grace* that the subject *deserve* evil. Accordingly, our first parents, while innocent, were not the subjects of *grace* in their enjoyment of the favour of God. "To him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of *grace*, " but of *debt*." Therefore,

I. WHEN *they* enjoy the divine *favour*, who really deserve and merit the *anger* of God; they are *then* the subjects of *grace*. When men enjoy  *blessings and good*, in the place of  *curses and evils* which are justly due to them; they are the subjects of *grace*. Only *grace* can relieve us from evils and sufferings which we deserve.

WE are, therefore, of necessity subjects of *grace* in being delivered from evils which we *justly deserve*; and, on the other hand, in having  *blessings* conferred upon us of which we are *utterly unworthy*. No consideration whatever can take away the *grace* of these  *blessings*, so long as our desert of the contrary evils remains.

WHEN no injustice would be done to men in casting them off forever, it cannot otherwise be than that they should be the subjects of *grace* in being saved. If men do not *deserve* eternal destruction

Rom. 4. 4.



destruction, it will necessarily be an *injury* to them to inflict it on them. But, when men feel themselves to deserve this fate, it will be impossible for them to view it as any other than grace to be delivered from it. It must, therefore be grace in God to deliver men from those evils which their sins justly deserve. To be saved from a punishment which we have truly merited by our wickedness, must of necessity be a mercy to us. To suppose otherwise would imply that we *justly* deserve punishment, and yet that *justice* requires we should be exempted from it. It is impossible for the sinner's desert of punishment to cease, otherwise than by having actually endured it. Therefore, it is impossible that it should be otherwise than *mercy to the sinner*, to save him from the punishment which he justly deserves for his wickedness. In whatever way this salvation comes to him, whether through an atonement, or not; still, to him it is grace; he is the subject of *grace*.

We may consider in the next place.

II. WHAT it is that constitutes the essence of atonement: And *this*, in order to know whether *atonement for sin* brings obligation on the *justice* of God to deliver and save the sinner.

RESPECTING *atonement*, it is to be observed that it summarily consists in an *exhibition* of the righteous displeasure of God against sin, made in some other way than in the punishment of the sinner. The real abhorrence in which God holds the character of the sinner, would be no more than truly and fully expressed in his eternal punishment. It is of the utmost importance that this disposition of the divine mind should appear in the government  
of

of God ; because this is his glory. Without this infinite purity and hatred of iniquity, he could not be GOD—be absolutely perfect. If divine government can be administered in such a way, without the punishment of the sinner, as properly to delineate this disposition of the divine mind, to the views of creatures ; the divine character will not suffer, by the pardon of the sinner. And in whatever way this disposition of the divine mind be delineated ; whether it be in the punishment of the sinner, or in some other mode not less expressive ; the ends of divine government, in general, are answered. One great end of the coming and death of *Christ*, was to delineate this disposition of the divine mind, and make a full and sensible exhibition of it. In *his* sufferings and death this divine purity, and hatred of iniquity, were sensibly and gloriously expressed. In the *sufferings of Christ* God gives us to see that his own infinite mind is full of displeasure against sinners. *Christ's* sufferings and death are a glass in which that character of God which we read in the threatnings and curses of the law, may become visible and conspicuous. After all that *Christ* has done and suffered, if God pardons and saves the sinner for *his* sake : it will afford us no reason to believe that there is less aversion in the divine mind from the character of the sinner, than the threatnings and curses of the law would naturally suggest. In this way, therefore, the honour of the law is preserved, though the sinner be saved.

VIEWED in this light, it is easy to see that the *atonement* infers no obligation on the *justice* of God, to pardon and save the sinner. The objection

jection is, not that the purposes of grace cannot be answered if the sinner be not saved, when atonement is made for his sins; but, that *atonement* implies an obligation, in *justice*, to save the sinner. But, if *justice* requires the salvation of the sinner, the Governor of the world must be guilty of *injustice* in damning him. To suppose that it would be *unjust*, in God, to damn the sinner, evidently implies that a *just* and *holy* God hath not displeasure enough in him, for this purpose. And, therefore that *such a degree of displeasure* could be made visible, neither in the atonement, nor in any other way. But, that such a degree of displeasure against sinners hath, in reality, no existence in the divine mind, at once destroys all notions of gospel *grace*, in their salvation; and *that*, whether they be saved through an atonement, or without it.

IF such a degree of displeasure against sinners hath a real existence in the divine mind; no external *evidence* of its existence can, possibly, render it unjust for God to destroy the sinner. The higher the evidence of this disposition rises, the more must it appear *grace* in God, to pardon and save the sinner. Yea, the whole evidence we have of its being *grace* must arise from the sensible demonstration of the existence of this *pure and holy* displeasure in the mind of God. So long as we consider the divine character as the standard of perfection, we cannot believe a creature to deserve any evil which *God* hath not displeasure enough to bring upon him. But, the more sensible we are of the anger of God, so long as we view it to be just and righteous; the more will it appear an act of *divine grace* to deliver the object of it from punishment.

THE death and sufferings of Christ are a glass in which we may behold the feelings of the divine mind toward sinners; and, read an abhorrence of their characters; a displeasure against them, which eternal destruction would no more than fully express. Had we no sensible evidence of the existence of this disposition, in the mind of God; we could have no evidence that the salvation of sinners is of *grace*. And had it not been for the coming and work of Christ, we could not have had sensible evidence of this, otherwise than in the actual destruction of sinners. Had God saved sinners without any atonement, his *government* would have furnished no evidence of any such aversion of the divine mind from the character of sinners. Consequently, there could not have been evidence that the salvation of sinners is of *grace*.

ACCORDING to this view of the matter, the *atonement* is so far from being inconsistent with the doctrine of *grace*, in the salvation of sinners, that it exceedingly illustrates it. *Atonement* is so far from proving that it is not an act of grace to pardon and save sinners; that, above every other consideration whatever, it shows it to be pure grace. Yea, the *atonement of Christ* is so far from obscuring *divine grace*, in the salvation of sinners; that, *without this*, grace could not have appeared. Had God saved sinners without doing any thing to vindicate the honour of his law, and witness his infinite hatred of iniquity; it could not have been evident that this salvation is of grace. The *atonement*, therefore, is so far from obscuring the lustre of *divine grace*; that it greatly adds to it: Yea, it is absolutely essential to the evidence of *any grace whatever*, in the salvation of sinners.

God,



GOD, himself, exerciseth no *grace*, excepting toward *sinners*. They, who are not sinners, cannot be the objects of grace. The divine righteousness itself is full security, for the innocent, against every evil. *Grace*, in God, is the bestowment of good upon those whose character he righteously abhors. *Grace*, therefore, as a quality of the divine character, can be seen no farther than his righteous abhorrence of the object of it becomes visible. The glory and greatness of *divine grace*, can be estimated only by the detestation in which God holds the character of the object toward whom it is exercised. Therefore, by how much the more sensible the demonstrations of divine *anger* are, against the character of the sinner, by so much the more conspicuous is the *grace* of God, in his pardon and salvation. The clearer views we have of the displeasure of God, on one hand; the more lively apprehension shall we have of divine grace, on the other.

VIEWING the atonement, therefore, as a glass in which the *righteousness* of God may be seen: instead of obscuring the lustre of divine *grace*, in the salvation of sinners, it greatly increases it. Yea, the atonement is the only glass in which the true beauty and glory of the free, sovereign grace of God can be seen.

OBJ. "IT is a beauty in the character of the  
" civil magistrate *to pardon*; and, *this* without  
" any atonement; which may, nevertheless, be  
" termed *grace*.

ANS. COULD human laws be framed with such perfection as that their penalties should express the displeasure of the community *only in cases where*

where the public good requires it should exist; pardon could in no case be, either consistently exercised by the supreme magistrate, or appear to be of grace. Were human laws then perfect, it would be injurious to the public to pardon, in any case whatever; and absurd to lodge a power to exercise it, in any branch of the executive authority. Pardon, in this case, would be so far from partaking of the real nature of grace, that it would be evident *injustice*. For the penalties of the law could never be incurred, excepting in cases where the common good requires that a public *odium* should be exercised and expressed. Therefore, from the propriety of pardons in civil government, we can infer nothing concerning the propriety and beauty of pardons, in the divine. And, should we admit as the case now actually is, that it is an act of grace, in the civil magistrate to pardon without atonement; it could not, however, be from thence inferred that it would be *grace in God*, even in any instance to forgive the sinner without an atonement.

If the displeasure of God exist in every case wherein the penalties of the divine law threaten it; pardon without an atonement, would be so far from being an act of grace, that it would be an *injury* to the public: And, for this obvious reason, that the divine displeasure *exists* in no instances whatever, but in those wherein the good of the universe requires it should be exercised. *This* may certainly be concluded from the perfect and infinite regard the divine Being has for the greatest good of the universe. But, in every case wherein the universal good requires that divine displeasure should *exist and be exercised*; it is exceedingly evident that the same principle re-  
quires

quires it should also be *expressed*. Therefore, pardon cannot consistently be bestowed without an *atonement*: Nor could it, without *this*, be an act of *grace*.

THESE observations give us to see the reason why the scheme of the salvation of sinners, through the atonement of Christ, is so much celebrated, in the gospel, for its consummate and unsearchable wisdom: And why a *crucified Christ* is represented as *the power of God and the wisdom of God*.<sup>1</sup> No wisdom, but that which is absolutely and infinitely perfect, could ever have found a way wherein the *sinner* could be pardoned, and yet the *public good* be saved: because *God* is not offended, nor hath the least disposition to punish, excepting in those cases wherein the public good requires that his displeasure be expressed. Could this displeasure be made to appear, and yet the public good be secured: pardon, in that case, might be consistently bestowed; and, would appear to be a glorious act of *divine grace*. Nothing but the *atonement of Christ* effects these ends; and, nothing like *this* bestows such lustre and glory on *divine sovereign grace*.

## CHAPTER

<sup>1</sup> I. Cor. I. 24.

## C H A P T E R IX.

*Showing in what way it may be accounted for, that the sufferings of Christ should be exceedingly great.*

**I**N order to see a possibility that the sufferings of Christ might have been very extreme, notwithstanding the absolute perfection of his *moral character*, we are to observe,

I. THAT the ground of happiness and misery in creatures, doth not lie *merely* in the mind, independently of all other considerations.

CERTAIN kinds, both of happiness, and of misery, are peculiar to certain particular temperaments of mind. But, susceptibility of pleasure and pain, is common to all creatures, whether good, or bad. It is not *only the virtuous*, who are susceptible of happiness; or, *the vicious*, of misery. Had this been the case, the happiness and misery of creatures would be the measure of their *moral characters*, and exactly proportionate to the degrees of their virtue, or vice. Constant experience and observation prove that, as *holiness and happiness* are not in the nature of things necessarily connected together; neither are *sin and misery*. All agree that Christ endured *some natural evil*: And, all know that sinners enjoy *much natural good*. Holy creatures are therefore susceptible of sufferings; and, sinful ones, of enjoyment. And, were it otherwise, there would be, neither occasion, nor room for moral government: But, virtue would always bring its own reward; and vice, its own punishment. *Happiness* consists, not in the *exercise of desire*,



*desire*, but, its *gratification*; And, *miser*y, not in the *exercise of sinful affection*, but in something which is *disagreeable*.

God hath *established* an indissoluble connection between holiness in this world, and happiness in the next; and, between persevering wickedness here, and compleat misery hereafter. This is essential to the most perfect moral government. But, were these connections originated by the mere nature of things, the necessity of a day of judgment would be wholly superseded: And, every creature would even now, enjoy all the rewards which are annexed to the practice of virtue; or, feel all the misery which is the just desert of sin. It is, therefore, manifest that the natural *dependence* which is universally found in *creatures*, whatever be their moral characters, renders them susceptible of *good* and *evil*, of *pleasure* and *pain*. There is, therefore, no *natural inconsistency* in supposing that the creature, who is wholly vicious, may enjoy much natural good; or, that one who is wholly virtuous, may suffer extreme misery.

Therefore,

2. THERE is no apparent difficulty in supposing that the man Jesus Christ might endure a very great and extreme weight of suffering. It was as truly compatible with the power of God to inflict pain upon this Son of his love, as on any other creature; and, to cause distress to rise to a very great height in him. It is inconsistent with the nature of things to suppose that Christ should suffer those horrors of an accusing conscience, which will make no inconsiderable part of the sufferings of the damned, in hell; and, with the very design of his coming, to imagine that he should

endure,

endure, even for a moment, that despair, which will make a very bitter part of the pains of God's enemies. There are, however, other considerations from whence distress might arise: And, such views of things might crowd in upon his pure and holy mind, as could not fail of being extremely painful.

It is to be remembered that the Lord Jesus Christ was truly *a man*; possessed of all the innocent passions and feelings of *human nature*. And, all the sufferings, the painful sensations he ever endured, were they greater or less, were in his *human nature*, and *confined to it*. It was the *human nature* of Christ that suffered: *an human-nature*, however, that was exceedingly dignified, and its powers greatly enlarged by its union to the *divine*:—a consideration which, instead of diminishing, greatly increased his *susceptibility* of distress.

CHRIST being thus possessed of the passions and feelings of human nature, there is no natural absurdity in supposing him, however free from sin, yet capable of very painful sensations. And as all pain is really seated in the *mind*, it is far from being unsupportable that the power of God might communicate such views of things to the man Jesus Christ, as could not fail of being very distressing to him. There is nothing absurd in the supposition that God might communicate, to the mind of Christ, a very clear view, and lively sense of his just and infinite displeasure against those whom the man, Jesus, came to save: And as little absurdity in supposing that *this view and sense of divine anger*, should greatly exercise the mind of Christ. And as this is a case very sup-  
posable,

possible, there is also a visible propriety in it: As we can hardly understand how the mind of Christ should, without it, clearly comprehend the greatness of the work he had undertaken; and how arduous a thing it was to redeem his people from the curse of the law, that they might be the righteousness of God in him.

As the mind of Christ was, unquestionably, susceptible of clear views, and a very lively sense of divine wrath against sinners; it is no less conceivable that these views, this sense, should be extremely painful and distressing to him. If there be any difficulty in supposing that a sense of divine wrath against sinners, should be very distressing to the man Jesus Christ: it must arise from one or other of these considerations, viz.

1. THAT this wrath was not against the person of Christ: Or,

2. THAT the large and extended views of things, which his union to the divine nature would necessarily suppose him to be possessed of, would as certainly prevent pain of mind; as the clear, full light of heaven will prevent it, in the saints who are spectators of the vengeance actually executed on the final enemies of God: Or,

3. THAT the *beauty* of the divine character which shone in that displeasure of God against sinners, which was exhibited in view to the mind of Christ; would necessarily occasion the manifestation of it to be pleasing instead of painful.

1. THE first objection is, that the wrath of God, a view of which was communicated to the mind of Christ, was not against him personally, but

but against sinners. According to this objection we are to remember, it is as hard to conceive that a view of divine wrath against sinners should give the *least degree* of pain to the mind of Christ, as that it should *fill it* with distress. For that object which is capable of ministering any degrees of pain, if it be of sufficient magnitude, may fill the mind with anguish. And if such views of the anger of God against those whom Christ came to save, could be communicated to his pure mind, as would affect him with the least uneasiness and concern: the communications might be so enlarged as to raise uneasiness and sorrow to a very great height.

BUT if a sense and view of divine anger against men, could give no pain to the mind of Christ *because he was not the object*; it must have been because he was susceptible only of pleasures and pains that were *merely personal*; which would be to reproach him with that same selfish, contracted spirit, which he came to eradicate from his people. This would suppose that he felt no interest in his church; and that, too, at the very time he was laying down his life for them.

It is very manifest that the interest we have in a person, or an object, is the thing that gives spring to our concern about it. And however sovereign the object may be from *our persons or selves*, yet an interest of *our affections* in it, lays a foundation for our deriving from it, either joy or sorrow, pleasure or pain. If the interest of the community, for instance, engages our attention and affections, more than any interest that is merely personal; whatever affects the community, will more sensibly exercise our minds, than any thing that merely affects our own private interest.

*A follower*



A *follower* of Christ, it may easily be imagined, has such an interest in his kingdom, as more sensibly to feel the injuries that are done to it, than any private injury to himself. And if vengeance must be directed against himself personally, or against the interest of his adored saviour; the latter may appear to him of such superior importance, as necessarily engages him to sacrifice his own to that of his glorious Lord. And if this be the effect which *the spirit of Christ* produces in the hearts of *men*; there can surely be no difficulty in conceiving that the affection which Christ himself had for his church, rendered him susceptible of great pain, in view of the just and awful displeasure of God against his people for their sins. It would indeed be utterly inconceivable that Christ should so love his people, as to lay down his life, and become a curse for them; and yet be wholly unaffected with a sense of the heat of that divine anger which he saw was against them.

THE reason why the mind is affected in a view of objects, is not originally their relation to a private separate interest; but their relation to an interest to which the affections are *united*, be it either *public* or private. Therefore, in proportion to the concern which the man Jesus Christ felt for the salvation of his people, would his mind be affected in a view of that dreadful wrath there was against them. This is not only conceivable, but is a supposition that is altogether natural. Therefore, that the divine anger, which was exhibited to the view of Christ, was not against him personally but against the church; is a consideration which gives us no reason to suppose that it might not affect him with ve-

ry deep distress. Christ had no degree of selfishness. His and his church's interest were one. Therefore his good-will to the church would occasion the divine displeasure to be as sensibly felt, as if it had been against him; at least as far as he perceived it, and had a view of it communicated to him.

2. ANOTHER objection against the supposition that the sufferings of Christ could be so extreme as has been represented, is, that the large and extended views of things, which his union to the divine nature would necessarily suppose him to be possessed of, would as certainly prevent pain of mind in him; as the clear, full light of heaven will prevent it, in the saints, who are spectators of the vengeance actually executed on the final enemies of God.

THIS objection as strongly denies the possibility of Christ's suffering the *least* distress of mind, as the *greatest*. And therefore, supposeth it as unaccountable that he should *weep over Jerusalem, or at the tomb of Lazarus*, as that he should endure the most extreme agonies of mind, in the garden and on the cross. But it is to be remembered that however real and intimate the union was between the human nature of Christ, and the divine; the former was as wholly dependent on God, as any other human nature; and in itself as susceptible of sorrow. Views of things that would be pleasant, or painful, might be communicated, or withholden, according to the mere good pleasure of God. Therefore, no possible union of the *human* nature of Christ, to the *divine*, would render the *former* invulnerable or necessarily unsusceptible of distress.

But it is objected, further,

3. THAT

3. THAT the *beauty* of the divine character which shone in that displeasure of God against sinners, which was exhibited, in view, to the mind of Christ; would necessarily occasion the manifestations of it to be pleasing and delightful, instead of painful and distressing.

THIS objection rests on the supposition that it is impossible we should receive pain from any thing which appears beautiful and excellent—— That even the contempt of a valuable friend, loses its power to wound, as soon as ever we can believe that we deserve it. But constant experience teaches directly the reverse to be true. When we are conscious that the displeasure which is exercised against us is undeserved; the character of him who indulges it, must of necessity sink in our esteem. And, no sooner is his character disesteemed, than his displeasure is disregarded. We pay no regard to the contempt of an *enemy*; while that of a *friend* never fails to wound. A consciousness that the displeasure which is exercised against us is righteous; is the very thing that gives it an edge. A sense of God's being offended, of *itself* gives no pain to his enemies; but when we become his friends, and feel that his anger is just and glorious, a sense of his displeasure immediately becomes painful. Were it otherwise, true goodness, upon its taking place in the heart of a sinner, would immediately render it a matter of indifference whether he were the object of divine *favour* or *anger*; and that for this obvious reason, that the same infinitely beautiful character of God shines in the *latter* as in the *former*.

It is, therefore, manifest, that the *beauty* of  
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the divine displeasure, will not occasion the manifestations of it to be less painful to an ingenuous mind ; but more so : because this is the very consideration that gives it an edge, and causes it to wound, when it appears to be against an object in which we feel ourselves greatly interested.

THESE things being so, it is manifest that the human nature of Christ was *susceptible* of sufferings from any, and every quarter from whence they *could* be derived to *innocent men* ; and that to as much greater a degree as *his* human nature might be superior to that of others.

It is hence manifest,

I. THAT the Father *could* withhold from the human nature of Christ, those views of himself, and those divine communications, which were the chief delight and joy of his heart. This may easily be conceived to be possible : And a denial of the possibility of it, involves the most manifest absurdity. And should it be so that the divine being should withhold from the man Jesus Christ, those manifestations of himself which had, before, been the support and comfort of his life ; it cannot otherwise be, than that he should be filled with sorrow and distress. For the greater were the delight and joy which the Saviour had in such divine communications ; the more pungent would be his sorrow, upon their being withholden from him : Nor could the certainty of their *future* return, be in any measure sufficient to prevent the pain occasioned by the *present* hidings of God's face.

AND, as this is evidently possible, Christ's own words while in his agony and on the cross ; and the



the language in which his sorrow and lamentation were, before, prophetically described; both concur to prove this in fact to have been the case. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? How long, O Lord, wilt thou *hide* thyself, forever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?" This is the language of Christ; and this the description of his distress: And the terms are but the natural expressions of a heart filled with sorrow, and now languishing under a withdrawment of those divine communications which had before been its support and life. And when it is plainly a supposable case, that God might so hide himself from the man Jesus, as to occasion in him great sorrow and grief; and the language in which the suffering Saviour of the world breathes out his sorrows, so evidently concurs with such an idea of the matter, and is so expressive of it; we have abundant reason to suppose that this was in reality the case.

2. God *could* so clothe himself with power, and exhibit his awful anger, in the manifestations he made of himself to the man Jesus Christ, as could not fail of being exceedingly amazing and distressing. *Innocent* creatures, we have already proved, are not unsusceptible of such impressions: Nor is it incompatible with the power of God to give them. The human nature of Christ, however united to the divine, was not unsusceptible of such impressions. And divine power might sustain it under a much greater weight of distress, of this kind, than equals the common, natural powers of man. And as it is far from being un-supposable in the nature of things, that this

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*Psa.* 22. 1. and 89. 46. *Matt.* 27. 46.

should have been the case; the sorrow and amazement which seized our blessed Lord, as his death approached; and his strong cries to the Father, if it were possible, that the cup might pass from him; very naturally lead us to suppose that God did put on awful frowns, and display divine anger, in the manifestations which he at that period made of himself to Christ. It would also be no more than natural to suppose, when the circumstances of the case are duly considered; that the views of *himself* which God exhibited to the mind of Christ, corresponded with his external treatment of him in his providence.

As all created nature is in itself imperfect, and absolutely dependent on God; it is manifest that, with respect to views of things, and divine communications, God might grant or withhold, just as he saw fit. And should the Father withhold from his son Jesus, in his last hours, those communications which had, before, been his delight and life; and at the same time communicate to him such a sense of his righteous and awful displeasure against those whom he came to redeem and save, as he was manifestly capable of receiving; it is exceedingly evident, both from Christ's unalterable love to God, and his invincible attachment to the good of his church, that it could not be otherwise than that he should feel inexpressible amazement and distress.

THERE is not the least need of supposing that the divine displeasure should be against the person of Christ, in order to his being deeply pained by such a view of it as might be made to him. And there is no objection arising from the *perfection* of Christ's character, or from the union of his *human nature* to the *divine*, against supposing that

that here was in fact the source of that pain of mind which he actually endured ; that will not be of equal weight against the supposition of a *possibility* that he should endure *any pain of mind* whatever. If the perfect holiness of the *man* Jesus Christ, and the union of his human nature to the divine, would render it naturally impossible that he should receive pain of mind from the considerations already suggested as the ground of his greatest sufferings ; they would render it impossible that he should perceive pain of mind in the view of any objects whatever that *could* be presented to him.

As to the propriety of the Saviour's being treated in such a manner as this, when he was *himself* the great sin-offering for the world ; we need only observe that the character of God, as the supreme Ruler and Judge, was greatly and especially concerned. It was never designed that the personal obedience and death of Christ here upon earth, notwithstanding his participation of the essence of God, should completely exemplify the whole, and every part of the character of the supreme governor of the world, to whom atonement was to be made. This could not possibly be done, so long as Christ sustained the character of a servant and acted in a subordinate capacity. But whenever a sacrifice of atonement is offered to God, the character of those *for whom* the offering is made, and of him to whom the sacrifice is offered, are both concerned ; and both to be, in some way, clearly expressed and brought to view ; in order that the controversy may be clearly understood, and a reconciliation, honourable to the *offended*, and safe to the *offender*, may take place in consequence of the offering. It became  
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the Saviour, therefore, when he was about to offer up *himself* as a sacrifice of atonement for sin, as much as was possible, to put himself in the place of the sinner. And it equally became the Sovereign of the universe to express, in a lively manner, his feelings toward the sinner, and his righteous anger against him, in his treatment of the *sacrifice*. This idea of things is implied in the very institution of sacrifices for sin; and very naturally springs, even from the very appointment of a *substitute* for sinners.

Thus it evidently appears that there is no greater difficulty in accounting for the sufferings of Christ, on the present hypothesis, than on any other supposed ground whatever; nor any absurdity in supposing them to have been inexpressibly great. And what has been before observed respecting God's great end in the creation and government of the world, the original ground and necessity of an atonement, and the actual substitution of Christ in the place of the sinner; all concurs to strengthen and confirm these observations; and prove that the principal weight of Christ's sufferings arose from the deep impressions which were made upon his mind, of the awful anger, the sore displeasure of God against sinners.

CHAPTER



## CHAPTER X.

*Showing in what sense atonement is made for the sins of the whole world.*

**I**T has been the common belief of christians that the death of Christ is, in its own nature, a sufficient atonement for the sins of the whole human race. And the general offers and invitations of the gospel, seem evidently to countenance such an opinion. For if the atonement be not sufficient for the sins of all ; it will be difficult to see how the offers of mercy may, consistently, be made to all. And if mercy through an atonement, may be consistently *offered* to all ; it will be asked, why may it not, also, be consistently *exercised* toward all ; and so *all* be finally saved ?

WHETHER the doctrine of universal salvation be a natural and certain consequence of *Christ's satisfaction*, will depend upon the ideas that are entertained of the *sufficiency* of the atonement which is actually made for the sins of men.

It is therefore to be observed,

I. THAT if by the *sufficiency* of Christ's atonement be meant *such a display of divine righteousness as supersedes all use of punishment* in the divine government ; the atonement made by Christ is *not sufficient* for the recovery of all. It is plain that all the valuable ends of punishment were not answered by the sufferings of Christ. For both reason and revelation assure us that the evils brought on mankind, in the present state, are fruits of divine anger. And if universal peace and happiness in the future world, may certainly

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be inferred from the sufferings of Christ; it will be difficult to give a reason why so many evils take place in the present. If divine anger has been so abundantly displayed *in the atonement*, as to render all future punishment unnecessary; it is hard to conceive the reason why so many evils are inflicted on the human race, in the present world. The present sufferings of mankind are an unanswerable proof that, however perfect the atonement be, in the divine view, all the valuable ends of punishment are not actually answered by it. For if it would be inconsistent with full atonement, for God to bring evils on men, in the future world; it would be equally inconsistent, for him to bring evils on them, in the present. If on account of the atonement, justice demands an exemption from all punishment in the next world; it equally demands it in this. It is therefore evident, from fact, whatever displays of divine righteousness and anger were made in the sufferings of Christ; that all the purposes of divine benevolence cannot be answered without a display of the same glorious attributes in a variety of evils brought upon men. And if it may subserve the purposes of divine benevolence to bring evils on men in this world; we can by no means be certain that it will not subserve the same glorious purposes, to inflict evils on them in the next. If temporary evils may answer valuable ends in the government of God, we cannot be certain that eternal ones may not also. If *evils* are necessary to the fullest display of the divine glory; we have no sufficient authority from the *atonement* to deny that they always will be necessary. If atonement doth not prevent their *present* necessity and use; we have no evidence that it will their *future*.

“ BUT ”

“ BUT” says the objector, “ the evils which are brought on mankind, in the present state, are only designed to form and raise the subject to higher degrees of felicity in the next world : And therefore are so far from manifesting divine anger, that they are but the natural expressions of God’s kindness to the sufferer. Consequently, all the displays of punitive justice that ever are to be made, were in fact made in the sufferings of Christ.”

BESIDES the express declarations of the word of God, which abundantly prove that the evils brought upon the world, are fruits of divine anger ; it is to be observed that this objection goes on a ground which denies the *necessity* of an atonement, or of *any exercise of punitive justice* : And therefore cannot consistently *infer* universal salvation from the atonement. The objection supposeth that the evils which God brings on the human race, are no evidence of divine anger : Consequently, universal salvation cannot be inferred from a *display of divine anger* in the sufferings of Christ. The objection supposes that the evils brought on men are only designed to beget in them a higher relish of happiness ; and therefore, that instead of testifying anger, they express nothing but kindness ; and will certainly issue in higher degrees of felicity.

To the objection, considered in this light, it may be replied,

I. THAT it is far from being evident that *merely a sense of misery*, on the whole, increases happiness. In order to take away the force of the argument for future punishment, which would naturally arise from the evils of the present state;

it must be supposed that pain and misery heighten pleasures; and are *necessary* to increase the relish of the good which it is supposed is laid up for men in the next world. And, therefore, that there is no evidence, from the evils of the present state, that God is angry; or that he has not the highest good of every subject really at heart. Thus it is said, it is well known that *losses* sweeten enjoyments; *pain*, pleasure; and *sickness*, health. But that this argument may have weight, it must be supposed that men may consistently *choose* to lose some of their present *comforts*, in order to sweeten the enjoyment of those that remain—*choose pain* to heighten pleasure; and *sickness* in order to *enjoy* health. But would any man, in his senses, make such a choice? would any man be glad of *pain and sickness*, that he might know the pleasure of health—choose to have his *house* consumed by fire, that he might *enjoy* the escape of his wife and children—or *lose one child*, that he might take greater comfort in the rest? Common sense, and the very feelings of mankind revolt from the supposition. And yet all this must be supposed, before the sentiment that present evils are no testimonies of divine anger, can be admissible. For if natural evils brought upon us *in this world*, are no testimonies of divine *anger*, there is no evidence that the *favour and friendship* of God will secure us against them, *in the next*. If they are a necessary mean of increasing felicity in the *present* state; where is the evidence that they will not be so in the *future*? And to what a height God may, in his *kindness*, raise them in the next world, it will be impossible for us with any kind of certainty, to determine. The objection before us rests on the supposition that our pleasures will be but feeble, and



and our enjoyments soon languish ; unless enlivened by a sense of pain. And if so, there can be no evidence that we shall ever arrive at a happier state of existence, than the present ; or be in a situation where the intermixture of good and evil will on the whole, be more favourable to felicity. But if, on the other hand, notwithstanding the *atonement*, divine *anger* be manifested in bringing evils on men in this world ; it can with no certainty be inferred from *this doctrine* that the wisdom of God will not see it to be necessary to bring evils on mankind, in the world to come.

2. BUT if the objection goes on the supposition that the evils and sufferings of the present state give clearer views of the riches and glory of *divine grace* ; and in that way prepare the subject for higher enjoyment ; this will imply that these evils are testimonies of divine *anger*. And if a view of divine anger be necessary to the clearest understanding, and the highest sense, of the nature and excellency of divine grace ; how can we be certain that it is not necessary to the highest felicity of the human race, that some manifestations of divine anger should be made to eternity ? and therefore that the happiness of the race, on the whole, may not be increased by means of the destruction of some part of it ? At least so much is evident, that there is no ground on which the objection before us can have weight, that will imply the least absurdity in the doctrine of eternal punishment. Nor is there any thing in the atonement more difficult to reconcile to *future* manifestations of divine anger, than to those which are in fact made in the *present* world.

II. IF by the *sufficiency* of Christ's atonement, be meant such a manifestation of divine displeasure

sure against the wickedness of men, as is enough to convince every candid spectator, that the disposition of the divine mind is perfectly conformable to the true spirit of God's written law; it may be truly said that there is sufficient atonement made for the sins of the whole world. It was apparently, the design of God that we should *infer*, from the sufferings of Christ, the awful effects of divine anger, should it fall with its full weight upon us. Therefore, the Saviour, alluding to his own sufferings, says, "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" We cannot rationally suppose that Christ would have reasoned in this manner, unless his own sufferings had been a *specimen* of divine anger, from whence very amazing effects, should it fall immediately upon us, might be inferred.

WHEN we consider the infinite dignity of the character of Christ, the sufferings which he endured, in the place which he sustained, give us as lively apprehensions of the righteous and inexorable anger of God against sinners, as all the awful threatenings of the law can possibly excite in us. And, every one who receives the testimony of Christ, and truly gives into the import of his death, thereby sets to his seal that God is true: Not only that the law itself is right; but that the government of God is perfectly conformable to the true spirit of it.

HERE there is a foundation laid, sufficiently broad, for the general invitations of the gospel; and for that joyful proclamation, that whoever will, may come and take of the waters of life freely. No glass had ever yet been held up before men, in which the divine wrath might be so clearly seen: Nor any thing ever exhibited, in the di-  
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<sup>1</sup> *Luke*, 23. 31.

vine government, which would raise the ideas of it, in creatures, to such a height; or enable them to form so just an estimate of it.

HERE the direct end of atonement is answered; and such a manifestation made of divine righteousness, as prepared the way for a *consistent* exercise of mercy. Now, God would not appear to give up his law, even though he pardoned the sinner: Or, to exhibit a disposition diverse from that which he expressed in the law. But, *merely* from the exhibition which was made of divine wrath in the sufferings of Christ, the pardon, even of one sinner could, with no certainty be inferred:— Unless it might be inferred from the highest evidences of the reality of God's displeasure against us, that *therefore* he would, certainly, *not punish*, but *pardon* us. Upon atonement being made, the situation and circumstances are such, that the great Governor of the world may consistently bestow, or withhold mercy, just as shall tend most effectually to answer the general purposes of divine goodness. Whereas, had there been no atonement, there would have been the highest inconsistency in the bestowment of pardon, even on one sinner. Now, the divine benevolence might express itself in having mercy on whom it would have mercy, and whom it would, hardening; just as it would contribute to the greatest felicity of the created system: While, without an atonement, benevolence itself could never have urged, or even admitted, the pardon of one sinner.

THE *atonement*, therefore, expresseth a benevolence which has, for its object, the highest good of the creation:—that very character of God which is expressed in the free and general invitation

invitations of the gospel. From *the atonement*, therefore, the universal salvation of sinners cannot with the least appearance of reason, be inferred; unless it be first made further evident, that the ends of the truest and most perfect benevolence cannot otherwise be compleatly answered: which, it is presumed cannot be done. *This doctrine*, consequently, never originated the opinion that sinners of mankind would be universally saved: But, it must have arisen from some other quarter.

It being thus manifest that the doctrine of atonement is far from being sufficient to support the lately prevailing sentiment respecting universal salvation, we may proceed to mention some things which give reason to suppose that *the very ends of the atonement* may be more perfectly answered without the universal salvation of sinners, than by it: And, that the eternal destruction of some part of the human race, will bestow a lustre on *this doctrine*, which it would want without it.

It may, first, be observed, in general, that whatever illustrates the dignity and glory of the character of Christ, does, of course, give import and significancy to the atonement. The higher the dignity and excellence of Christ's character rise, in the view of creatures; the more important will his sufferings and death naturally appear. The greater import, also, there appears to be, in the sufferings of the Saviour; the deeper will the impressions be, on the minds of creatures, of the awful anger of God against sinners. By how much the higher ideas of divine anger against sin, rise in the creature; by so much the more clear and lively will be the sense and view of the freedom and richness of sovereign *grace*: which will, proportionably,



proportionably, contribute to the greater felicity of the subjects of it. So that it appears to be of great importance, even to the very ends of the atonement itself, that the dignity of Christ's character should be set in the clearest point of view.

HENCE it is that the human race are, all, given into the hand of Christ, for him to dispose of forever: As appears from his being appointed the judge of the world. And, that the atonement may receive additional import from the eternal destruction of sinners, and the glory of Christ's character be greatly illustrated by the vengeance which he takes upon his enemies, is evident from the following considerations, viz.

1. THE dignity and glory of a Conqueror, appear as illustrious in the destruction of his enemies, as in the deliverance of his friends: And regards to the public good, are as strongly painted in the evils which are inflicted on the opposers of it, as in the protection which is offered to its friends. Therefore, the Father is represented as saying to Christ, in consequence of his having finished the work of redemption, "Ask of me, and I will give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth, for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, *thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*"<sup>1</sup> In this way is Christ to triumph over his enemies. This is to be a part of his reward for his sufferings. And, a promise of such a triumph would never have been made to him, unless it would contribute to his greater glory, and render his merit more conspicuous. And, if the true merit and glory of  
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Christ's character may be illustrated in this way ; this would naturally lead us to expect that his tender love to his church and his infinite aversion from the enemies of his cause and kingdom will be exhibited in awful vengeance on impenitent sinners, at the day of judgment.

2. CHRIST'S executing vengeance at the day of judgment, will naturally express a higher degree of respect to the moral law, than could have appeared without it. The real merit of Christ, in character of mediator, consisteth solely in his regards to the moral law, or to that character of Jehovah which is expressed in it. Had not his obedience and death, while upon earth, flowed from this principle, it would have been of no worth in the sight of God. But because he *loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, therefore* God, his God, hath anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows.' Had he not expressed the highest sense of the excellency of the divine law, his obedience and death would not have been the least ground for mercy to sinners.

BUT while he was upon earth, neither in his life, nor in his death, had Christ *advantage* to express, in full perfection, his infinite love to the law of God. For *this* he needed to sustain a different character from that which he appeared in while on earth ; and to be in a different station. While in the world, he held the station of a servant ; and appeared, and acted, in no other capacity. *Then* he expressed the most perfect respect and love for the divine law, which his situation and character would admit of being expressed. He acted his part in perfection here upon earth.

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<sup>1</sup> *Psalms, 45. 7.*

His whole life was a scene of the most perfect and spotless obedience ; and that in the midst of the greatest opposition and trials. And further to discover his entire approbation of the divine law, and the high estimation in which he held that glorious character of Jehovah which appears in it ; the Saviour himself submitted to death, and voluntarily became a curse. But the part which he had to act for God, and for his glory and honour as the great lawgiver and judge, was not yet come to an end. Therefore was it of importance that he should be set at the head of the universe ; be appointed judge of quick and dead ; and pass the solemn decisive sentence, which would fix the fate of creatures to eternity. In this high and exalted station, the regards of the divine mediator to the moral law, his love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity, are expressed in ways in which he had no advantage to discover them, while he was upon earth ; and glow in colours in which they never could before appear. Before, he manifested love enough to the law of God, as a *servant*, to obey it even unto death : Now, as a *King* and *Judge*, to administer government according to the strict tenour of it ; dispensing rewards and punishments, and actually inflicting the death which the law threatens. As a servant, he loved it to a degree which engaged him to endure the curse ; as a King, to inflict it. Before, it appeared that he loved sinners well enough to die for them ; now, that he loves God well enough eternally to damn them.

FROM his station, therefore, as King and Judge, the Mediator is viewed in a different light from what he could appear in before ; and clearer discoveries are made of his real and transcendently

excellent character. Now his love to the divine law puts on a different form from any in which it had before been ever seen. And this act of awful justice, in dooming impenitent sinners to eternal death, gives an import, a significance, to the sufferings of Christ, which creatures never could have apprehended without it; giving a solemn majesty to his death, which will enable his people, forever, more highly to prize it.

HERE we see an obvious reason why the *Mediator* should be appointed the judge of the world. This exalted station, the holy scriptures teach us, was given him in reward for his sufferings, for his obedience unto death. And, in this last solemn act, before he gives up the kingdom into the hand of the Father, he hath advantage to exhibit, in more strong and glorious colours than could ever before appear, the perfect union and harmony, in himself and in his arduous work, of *mercy and truth*, and of *righteousness and peace*. These not only have harmonized and united in all the doctrines which he taught, and the work which he accomplished, on earth; but they meet, and kiss each other in the solemn sentence of his lips, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world," And, "depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

3. THE greater respect is manifested to the law of God, by such a person as *Christ who died for sinners*; the more evident will be, both the evil of sin, and the necessity and import of the atonement.



ALL the new honours reflected upon the divine law, by the mediator, necessarily increase and heighten the ideas of the evil of sin. And, by how much the more the evil and malignity of sin are made manifest; by so much the more necessary will the atonement appear: and the significancy and importance of it be proportionably increased, in the estimation of creatures. And yet, without this last and solemn act of judgment, it is exceedingly manifest that the high estimation in which the divine law is held by the divine Redeemer, could never be so clearly discovered, or so sensibly apprehended by creatures; even, though he *died* to magnify and make it honourable. The saints, therefore would forever be destitute of that discovery of righteousness, in the mediator, which, above every thing else, crowns those regards of his, to the law of God, which he expressed in dying upon the cross.

BUT, when the regard of Christ, to the divine law, is seen from the seat of judgment, and expressed in a sentence of everlasting punishment upon impenitent sinners; the saints will then see, in a more clear light than they ever could before, how great a thing it was for *Christ* to die for *sinners*; and himself, become a *curse* for them, that they might be the *righteousness of God* in him. By these means, therefore, the divine purity and hatred of iniquity will be greatly heightened to the views of creatures; and, clearer apprehensions, consequently, be had of the nature, the extent, and the glory of divine, sovereign mercies: All which, it is easy to see, contribute to a vast enlargement of the powers and happiness of those who are saved by Christ.

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BUT, on the other hand, should it be that the sentence of the law is, in no instance executed, at the last day; it is exceedingly manifest that one glorious testimony of Christ's respect to the divine law will be wanting; And, therefore, one evidence, of the necessity and importance of his death. And, in proportion as the evidence of all these is defective, the ideas of divine *grace* must be diminished; and the glory of the whole gospel fade away.

THESE observations make it manifest that the *atonement*, notwithstanding its entire sufficiency and fullness, is far from implying, either a necessity, or certainty, of the salvation of the whole human race: So far from it that, on the other hand, both the necessity and import of the atonement may be greatly illustrated by the eternal destruction of impenitent sinners. And if the preceding observations are just, the true nature of atonement could never be seen, nor properly understood, nor the real worth of it be suitably estimated, were the penalty of the law, in no instance, executed in its full extent upon transgressors.

AND as the sense we have of divine *grace* must necessarily be in proportion to the ideas we entertain of God's hatred of iniquity; it seems no more than rational to suppose that, in order to preserve and heighten a sense of grace, in those who are saved from among men; there will be *perpetual* displays of divine anger, on vessels of wrath. And to see this vengeance executed by *him who himself became a curse for his people*, will greatly exalt his character, and give a language, a significance, to his death, which was never before so clearly understood.

CONCLUSION.

## CONCLUSION.

It may be of advantage before we dismiss the subject, to turn our attention, for a little while, to some of the natural consequences of a *denial* of the doctrine of atonement; or of the supposition that the *mere persevering obedience of Christ*, was all that was necessary to open a way for mercy to sinners. These two opinions will probably be found, on careful inquiry, to amount to one and the same thing: At least, not to be materially different in their consequences. They both deny any real necessity, arising either from the moral character of God, or from any other consideration, of his executing any punishments; or, when *sin had taken place*, of displaying in its natural fruits, that displeasure which the penalties of the law would naturally suggest.

ON these sentiments it may be observed,

I. THAT if it be unnecessary to the glory of the divine character, and the good of God's moral government, that he should *express his displeasure against sin*, when it had actually taken place, by inflicting *natural evil*; it was of course unnecessary that God should ever *threaten* the sinner with natural evil. Where the general good doth not require punishments to be inflicted, it doth not require that they should be threatened. So also in cases where benevolence will not express displeasure, it will not threaten creatures with it. It discovers capriciousness and want of wisdom, to annex penalties to laws, which never need be executed—to express displeasure *in words*, in cases wherein it doth not *in fact* exist. On supposition, therefore, that God's displeasure against

against sinners never need be expressed *in natural evils*; it is evident that the moral law, abounding as it does with awful threatenings, doth not express the true and real character of God; but one infinitely the reverse; exhibiting *in words*, anger which hath no *existence* in the divine mind, and dressing the great governor of the world in vengeance, while anger is not in him. Nothing, therefore, can more directly subvert the first principles of divine revelation, than the supposition that it is unnecessary to the glory of the divine character, that God should express, in natural evil, his displeasure against sin. That opinion which supposeth that sin might have been forgiven without atonement, clothes the divine Being in a character exceedingly diverse from that in which he appears in the moral law; and represents him as being possessed of a *goodness* of an exceedingly different nature from that which the moral law naturally exhibits. Therefore, for Christ to come, and magnify *this law* and do it honor; when it exhibits a character, in God, so infinitely diverse from that which would certainly have saved sinners, even though Christ had never appeared on earth; would be very far from being pleasing to the *Father*: And never, in *his* view, could have merited that high station to which he is now exalted.

THESE consequences necessarily flow from a denial of the necessity of an atonement; if it be granted that the moral law, as promulgated in the sacred scriptures, speaks the mind and will of God. If the divine will, the feelings of the divine mind, perfectly correspond with the written law; it is inconceivable that God's anger against sinners should not be expressed, in his  
moral



moral government, by natural evil. And when we consider the supremacy and mighty power of God, to deny the need of natural evil in order truly to express the character of God; when sin hath actually taken place; is the same as to deny that there are any feelings in the divine mind, which, in their natural consequences and expressions would bring evil on sinners. For if such feelings exist in the divine mind, they cannot be known otherwise than by being *expressed in God's works*. And if it is God's great end to make himself known, and in works exhibit his true character to the views of his creatures; there is no more reason to suppose that the scenes of divine government will be destitute of the fruits of this part of the character of God, than of those which directly express his approbation of virtue.

THE supposition, therefore, that atonement is not necessary to the exercise of mercy toward sinners, evidently implies that the written law doth not, in fact, speak the very mind and will of God: But that the law itself, at furthest, intimates no more than that the sinner *who persists in wickedness* shall fall under the divine anger. But that persevering wickedness and impenitency, and these only, shall subject us to the anger of God, is so far from being the language of the divine law, that it *curseth* every one that *continueth not in all things* written in the book of the law to *do them*. If, therefore, nothing but persevering wickedness so incurs the divine anger as to expose to natural evil; nothing can be more certain than that the written law doth not indeed truly express the will of God. This must be true, unless the plain and natural language of the law, is that *only certain, atrocious sins* shall be punished.

punished. And if the consequences of a denial of the necessity of atonement, which have already been mentioned, be admitted to stand until *this* can be found to be the language of God's written law; they will not suddenly be subverted.

He that can put such a construction on the *moral law* as leaves room for the escape of sinners of certain denominations and characters; with an equal degree of dexterity in criticism and construction, will soon discover, that sinners of *every denomination* may, *even by law*, be exempted from punishment: And therefore enjoy, for a little while, the poor consolation of believing that anger is not in God, and that there are no punishments for the wicked.

2. If it be unnecessary to the glory of the divine government, that God's anger against sinners should be *expressed* in bringing natural evil; it is equally unnecessary that any such displeasure as would, in its natural fruits and operation, bring evil on sinners, should ever *have existence* in the divine mind. The supposition that divine anger need not be exercised and expressed, implies that it is of no use; and therefore not an excellency in God: And consequently can have no existence in him.

Thus the opinion that there is no necessity for God's expressing his anger against sinners, by bringing natural evils upon them; not only cuts off the penalties of the law, but exhibits the divine character itself in a point of light exceedingly diverse from that which the moral law naturally expresseth. And the denial of any necessity of atonement, in order to a consistent exercise of  
pardon

pardon and mercy ; plainly amounts to a denial of the necessity of punishments, under the divine government ; or of any necessity arising from the divine perfection, that God should ever express displeasure by inflicting natural evil.

NEARLY the same consequences are involved in the opinion that the *persevering obedience* of *Christ* was all that was necessary in order to open a way for mercy to sinners. For unless this persevering obedience expressed divine anger against sinners ; it is manifest that there is no necessity that God should either exercise, or express anger : And therefore, all the consequences which flow from a denial of the *necessity* of atonement, flow equally from this construction of the *nature* of it.

BUT to say that *Christ's obedience* expressed divine anger against sinners, is the same as to say that all that anger which exists in the divine mind, against them, may be expressed without natural evil—without punishments. This is evident ; because it is implied in the supposition before us, that *Christ* expressed and acted out the character of God ;—that the disposition of the divine mind was perfectly delineated in *Christ*, and in his obedience. And if the whole disposition of the divine mind toward sinners, may be expressed without natural evil, without punishment ; it is plain that no punishment is ever to be expected or feared : And *that* for this obvious reason, that there is in fact no disposition in the divine mind actually to punish offenders ; or to bring natural evil upon them.

FURTHER ; to say that God expresseth displeasure against sinners by *rewarding the obedience of*  
Y
*Christ*

*Christ with a pardon to sinners*; is still saying that there is no anger in God; but what may be properly and fully expressed by bestowing *rewards*. It would be absurd to suppose that the rewards which a master, or a parent, bestows upon an obedient servant, or child, express displeasure against the rest of the family. And if such be all the anger that ever exists in the head of a family; neither children, nor servants, need ever be afraid of punishment. So if all the displeasure which exists in the divine mind against sinners, may be expressed in rewarding the obedience of Christ; it is apparent that there is no displeasure which need ever be expressed in inflicting punishment.

SHOULD it be urged that both the Father and the Son expressed displeasure against sinners, by unitedly acting against the *cause of sin*; and that this is all the way in which it is necessary the divine anger should appear; the consequence would still be that there is no disposition in the divine mind to punish offenders. Because this implies that God may express all the displeasure which he really hath against sinners, by acting in such a manner, in his providence, *for* the cause of righteousness, and *against* that of iniquity, as would render all punishment unnecessary.

THE denial of any *necessity* of atonement, and every construction of the *nature* of it which renders punishments unnecessary; are equally subversive of the moral law. Every explanation of the nature of atonement which implies it to be unnecessary that God should express anger against sinners by *natural evils*; invests the divine Being with a character very different from  
that



that which the moral law naturally expresses. All such ideas, either of the necessity or nature of atonement, suppose that there is nothing in the moral law, which would naturally and necessarily forbid an expectation of pardon, upon repentance; even though Christ had never come into the world: And therefore, that the penalties of the law do not, in words, express any such displeasure against sinners, as, in its natural operation and fruits, would bring the punishments spoken of in the law, upon them. Such ideas of atonement imply that, whatever disapprobation may exist in the divine mind, of the characters of sinners; still it is of such a nature that it may all be expressed without natural evil: Or, at least, that we could not have inferred from the clearest view we could have had of it, that God would ever punish sinners; even had Christ never come into the world and died.

THE whole controversy respecting atonement, therefore, turns upon the *explanation* of the moral law; and probably arises from different constructions put upon it. If the written law is expressive of an anger in God against sinners, which, in its natural operation would bring eternal punishment upon them; it is obvious that the spirit of the law cannot be preserved in government, unless this anger be, in some sensible way, exhibited to the views of creatures: and consequently, that it would be inconsistent with the character of God to pardon sinners, without an atonement; and such an one as should exhibit this anger; and in which it should appear to burn against sinners.

BUT on the other hand, if God may consistently

ly pardon sinners without an atonement; or without exhibiting an anger which would bring eternal destruction upon sinners, should it fall immediately upon them; it is obvious, either that the law exhibits no such character, in the great Governor of the world, as would naturally lead us to expect such an event; or that the true character of God is not fairly delineated in the moral law. For that the law should threaten eternal death to every transgressor, and at the same time fairly and faithfully delineate the moral character of God; and yet that God should pardon the sinner without any atonement; is a manifest absurdity. The supposition, therefore, that God may consistently pardon, without any atonement, either wholly subverts the divine law, or gives a view of it totally different from that which is naturally exhibited in an atonement.

HERE, then, according to the ideas of those who deny the atonement, are the true feelings of genuine, gracious repentance: at least it involves an apprehension that it would be inconsistent with the very nature, and with every idea of *goodness*, for God to shut us out from his favour. From any repentance toward God, which involves those ideas of the divine character, it is easy to see the human heart is not naturally very averse. Yea, to define any material change, with respect to its views of the divine character, which takes place in the human heart, in repentance; will, on this hypothesis, be utterly impracticable. Surely no such change can be conceived as renders divine, supernatural influences, in any measure necessary. We need not, therefore, be surpris'd to hear those who deny the necessity of atonement,

atonement, renounce every idea of divine supernatural operation, in the conversion of sinners.

AND with what appearance of consistency, gentlemen who entertain such ideas respecting atonement, can urge that this is a doctrine which subverts the very notion of *grace* in the pardon of sinners; is hard to be conceived. For, with such, it is a fundamental maxim that it would be inconsistent with *goodness* to deny pardon to penitents. On this foundation the superstructure of their whole system is built. And what *grace* there can be in conferring pardon, in cases wherein it would be *unjust and cruel* to withhold it, cannot possibly be imagined. Little reason have those who entertain such sentiments, to exclaim against the advocates of atonement, as denying the doctrines of *free grace* in the salvation of sinners.

THUS manifest is it, that the denial of atonement makes a total change in the aspect, not only of the moral law, but also of the whole christian system. It exhibits both the divine character itself, the doctrines of Christ and his Apostles, and the terms on which the sinner may be pardoned and saved, in a light infinitely diverse from that in which they all appear *in the atonement of Christ*.

AND now it must be left with the candid, intelligent reader, to judge for himself; faithfully comparing what is here offered with the *unerring oracles of God*. These are the only standard of truth; and by these must every doctrine be tried. Every sentiment, every scheme of doctrine that will not bear this test, however cherished, or by whatever great name it be authorized, will sooner or later fall to the ground. While, on the other  
hand

hand, every system; and every sentiment that is found here, however unpopular, however exploded by the great and the wise, among men; will infallibly stand, and shine, and brighten forever and ever.

AND the whole must be left with HIM who, *himself*, made atonement for the sins of the world; for him to use, and to dispose of, as in infinite wisdom, he shall see will be for the best. With *Him* the cause of *truth* may be confided; in *his* hand it is infinitely safe. May the time be hastened when the darkness shall be dispelled, and the light shall shine: when *his* truth, such as it is, shall be known and be confessed, from one end of the earth even unto the other; and the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. A M E N.

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## Errata.

**P**AGE 6, Line 2, from the Bottom, for *its* read *his*. P. 15, L. 11, between *be* and *ultimately*, insert *not*. P. 16, L. 9, read in order that *his* *salvation* may be consistent with the end of God, &c. P. 20, L. 6, fr. Bot. for *course* read *method*. P. 21, L. 6, for *course* read *meth.d.* P. 53, L. 6, for *induced* read, *endured*. P. 59, L. 25, for *sanctified* read *sacrificed*. P. 104, L. 21, for *approbation* read *disapprobation*. P. 117. L. 1, dele *not*. P. 126, L. 4, for *then* read *thus*. P. 132, L. 9, fr. Bot. for *sovereign* read *foreign*.

1870

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